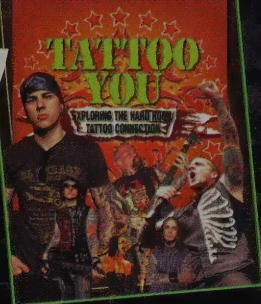


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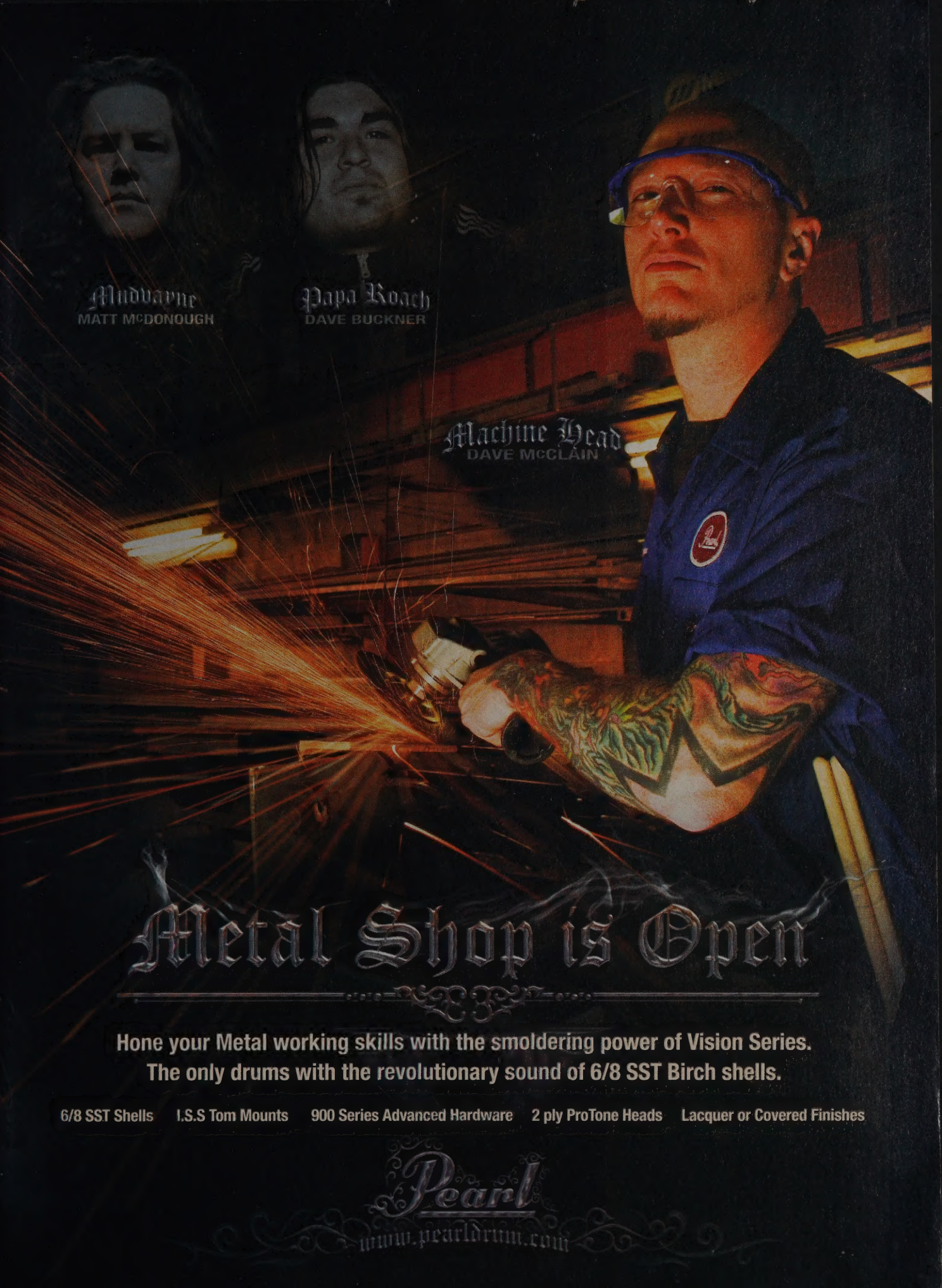
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C O N T E N T S

FEATURES

24 MARILYN MANSON
GOOD TIMES... BAD TIMES

26 ARMY OF ANYONE
AN OPEN INVITATION

28 HEAVEN AND HELL
MOB MENTALITY

30 KITTIE
ROARING BACK

32 HATEBREED
SUPREME STATEMENT

34 TYPE OF NEGATIVE
DOOM MERCHANTS

36 CHEVELLE
FAMILY BUSINESS

44 KILLSWITCH ENGAGE
DELIVERING DAYLIGHT

46 SHADOWS FALL
MAINTAINING THE THREAD

50 NINE INCH NAILS
ZERO HOUR

52 MACHINE HEAD
HEAVY DUTY

54 VELVET REVOLVER
BACK IN CONTROL

56 KORN
SHOWING THEIR OTHER SIDE

58 OTEP
ON THE RISE

60 SALIVA
BLOOD & GUTS

64 LORDI
YIKES!!

66 DAATH
THE SEARCH IS ON

68 LINKIN PARK
MIDNIGHT MAYHEM

COVER STORY

38 OZZY OSBOURNE: THE METAL GODFATHER RETURNS

DEPARTMENTS

6 WE READ YOUR MAIL

10 HEAVY METAL HAPPENINGS
THE HOTTEST NEWS

11 METAL MUSINGS

14 CAUGHT IN THE ACT
ARMY OF ANYONE

16 THE EDGE

17 COMING AT YOU!

18 SHOOTING STARS
FOSTER CHILD

18 PICK HIT
FU MANCHU

20 COLLISION COURSE

21 INDIE REVIEWS

50 CENTERFOLD: OZZY

76 TOYS IN THE ATTIC
GAMES & GEAR

78 TECH TALK
STONE SOUR

80 INSTRUMENTALLY SPEAKING

82 DRUM BEAT

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**LET US KNOW WHAT'S
ON YOUR MIND!**

IS METAL DEAD?

I got really angry at my high school the other day when a friend of mine said that heavy metal music was dead. He's a dweeb who listens to rap, so what does he know? But it got me to thinking about how many of today's bands are gonna be remembered 20 years from now the way we still remember the likes of Led Zeppelin and Guns N' Roses. I sure hope there are a lot of them.

Brian
Oakland, CA

charts, and if their discs sell 100,000 units it's considered a big deal. I remember when selling a million copies was the benchmark of success. I don't know what can be done to remedy this situation, but with the so-called "baby boom" generation now too old to support metal, and today's kids seemingly more interested in rap and video games, I can't say that I'm overly optimistic about the form's future.

Mark
Boston, MA

My two favorite bands of all-time are Shadows Fall and Lamb of God. I say that because I think they represent the next evolutionary step for heavy metal. They draw upon some of the great ideas and inspirations of the past, yet they manage to create music that is totally original and totally unique. More than anyone else out there, I think those two bands are going to lead heavy metal to new creative and commercial heights.

Chad
Cleveland, OH

I found your magazine in my brother's room, and after quickly looking through it, felt that I had to write to you. I am a fan of REAL recording artists like Josh Groban and Christina Aguilera— people with REAL talent. My stupid brother likes to listen to disgusting bands like Slayer... just to annoy me and my parents. Don't all of you realize that what you're listening to is the devil's music? It's not beautiful at all. I think if you listened to REAL music for a change you'd realize what you were missing. I truly pity all of you.

Valerie
Topeka, KA

'90s SALUTE

Thanks for your recent **Hit Parader Salutes The '90s** special issue. I lived through that decade, and it was an amazing time

Judas Priest: Shaming the
"fresh faces" of metal.

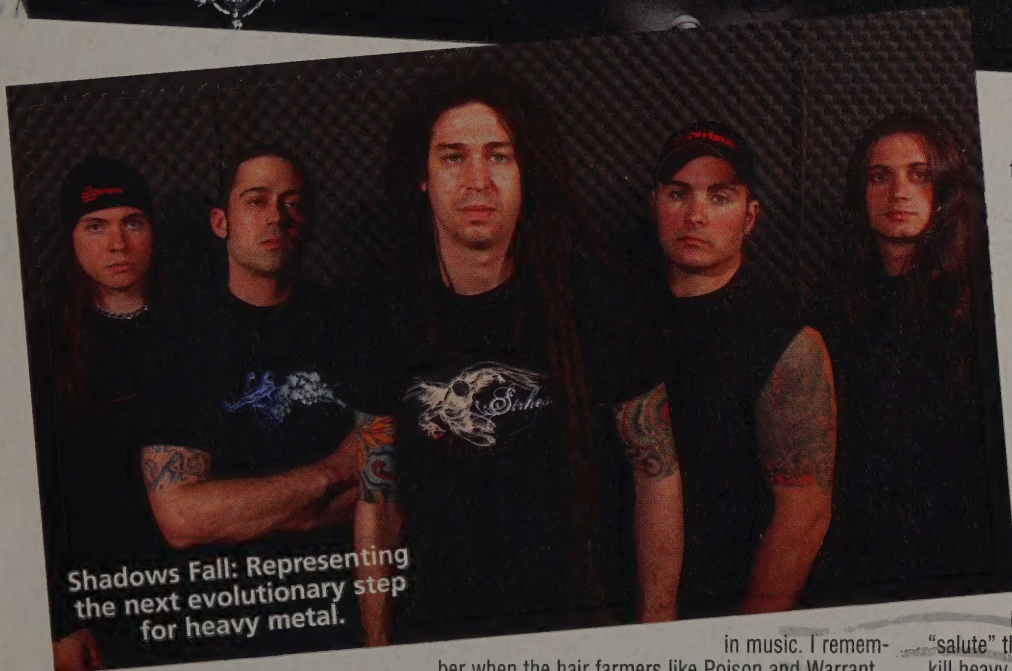
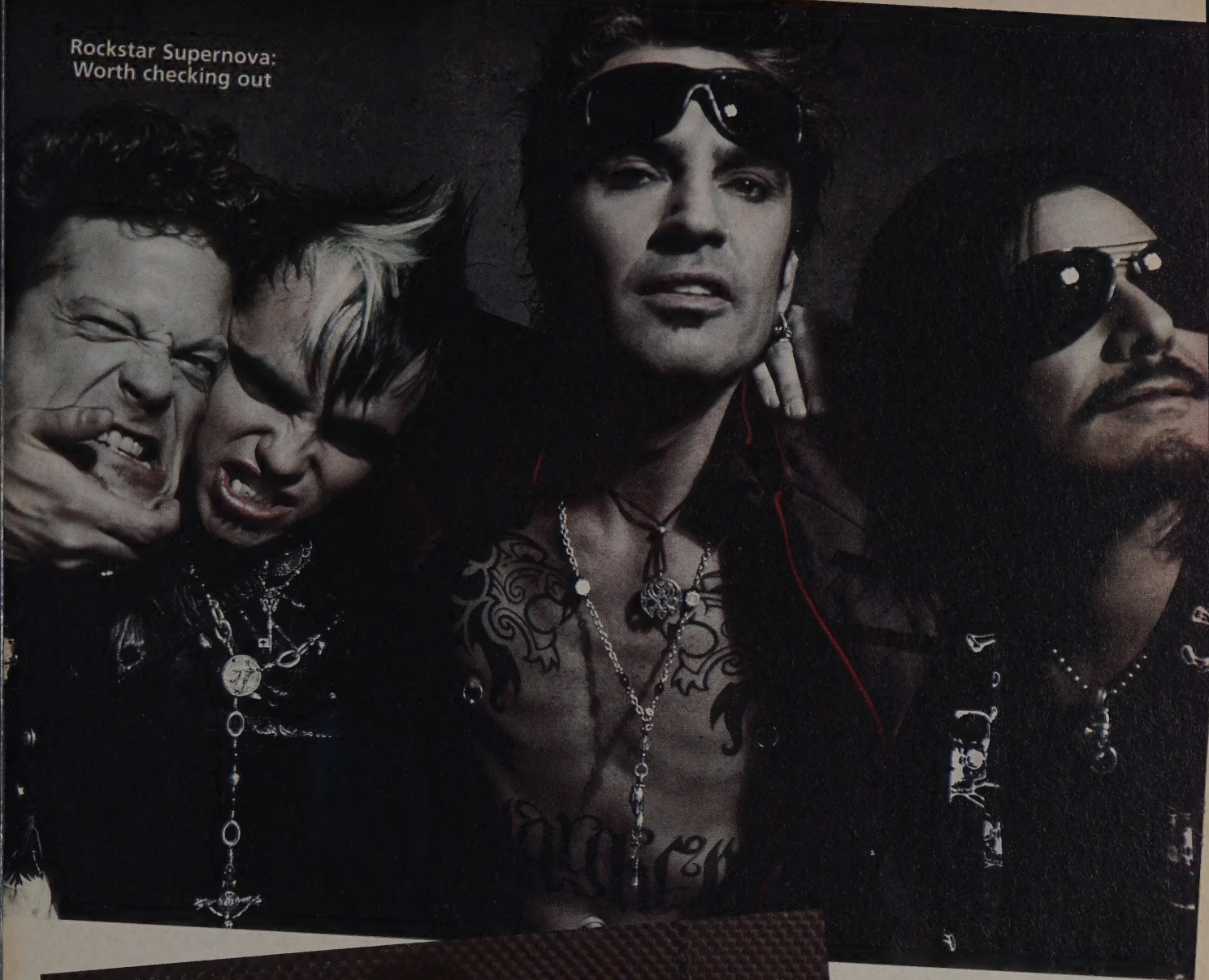
As a life-long fan of heavy metal music—and someone who is old enough to proudly say that he saw the likes of Judas Priest, Slayer and Iron Maiden when they were all still considered "fresh faces" on the music scene, I must express my concern about the state of the Metal Empire. Yeah, I'm one of those people who reads the charts and studies radio play patterns, and my observation is this: metal is in a state of decline. That's not to say that there isn't great music being made—I especially enjoyed the recent albums by Killswitch Engage, Mastodon and Bullet for my Valentine. But these days metal bands rarely crack the Top 100 of the

6 HIT PARADER



Slayer

Rockstar Supernova:
Worth checking out



**Shadows Fall: Representing
the next evolutionary step
for heavy metal.**

were there one day... and gone the next, pushed aside by the more "substantial" music presented by the likes of Nirvana and Soundgarden. That decade changed the face of hard rock forever.
Jennifer
Hoboken, NJ

in music. I remem-
ber when the hair farmers like Poison and Warrant

I thought it was very interesting that in your recent '90s issue, you didn't mention Metallica. I know that they earned their rock and roll "bones" in the '80s, and made their biggest impact during that decade, but they were big-time players in the '90s as well. I'm sure there had to be a cut-off line concerning who to include in that issue and who not to, but I believe that Metallica should have certainly made the cut. After all, even you guys claim they're the Greatest American Heavy Metal Band of All-Time.
Sid
Miami, FL

Why would **Hit Parader** a true heavy metal magazine, want to "salute" the decade that basically did its best to kill heavy metal? Let's not forget that when "grunge" hit in the early '90s, it basically convinced everyone at the record labels, MTV and rock radio to stop signing and playing conventional hard rock acts and start turning towards something new. I'm not saying that the



mousse-abusing bands that littered the late '80s didn't need to get slapped around a little bit, but grunge altered the course of the hard rock landscape forever... and it didn't do it in a very positive manner.

Fred
Austin, TX

I love '90s music. I think it was the decade when rock and roll really grew up. The '60s were just the beginning.

band's debut disc, I found that my initial reaction was correct. This is the very definition of "pedestrian" hard rock. And their vocal "discovery", Lukas Rossi? I hope he kept his day job.

Wayne
Buffalo, NY

I'm not glad that Audioslave broke up. Their most recent disc, **Revelations**, didn't do very well in terms of sales— despite being an excellent effort. And now Chris Cornell is off doing a solo tour where he's playing Soundgarden and Audioslave material with *different* musicians. Hey, if nothing else, maybe it's time to get Rage Against The Machine back together on a permanent basis.

Pat
Mooreville, IN

I'm getting really sick and tired reading about Velvet Revolver's seemingly endless



Velvet Revolver: Drawing fan support.

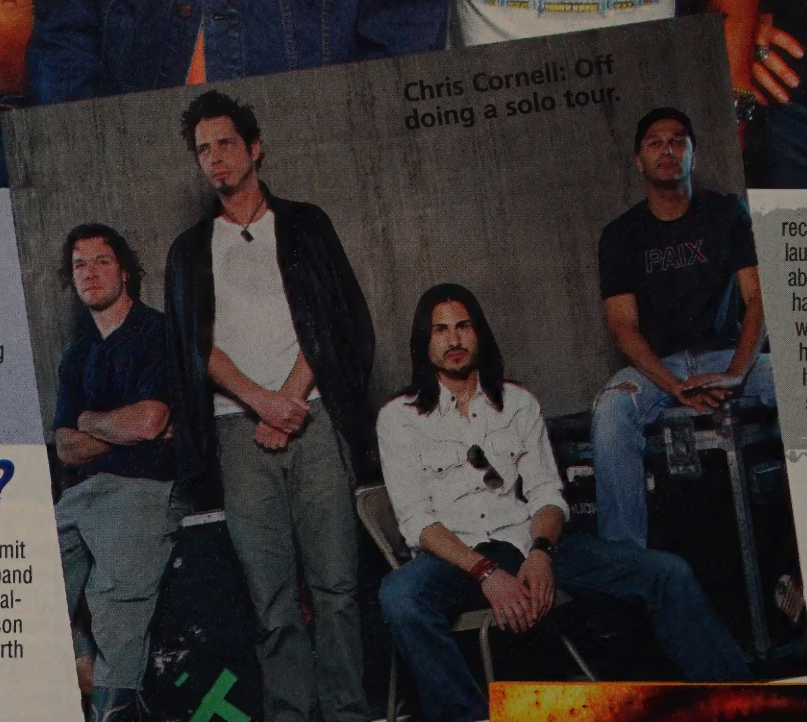
The '70s were so filled with pomp and circumstance. The '80s were marred by too much of a party-hearty attitude. But by the '90s, bands began to look at the world around them and realize that rock and roll was a great forum for expressing their hopes, dreams and frustrations.

Vince
Woodsworth, Ohio

SUPERGROUPS?

After watching their horrendous TV show, *Rock Star*, last summer, I must admit that I didn't hold out great hope for the band Rock Star Supernova. But I figured that talent like Tommy Lee, Gilby Clarke and Jason Newsted (prior to his injury) was still worth checking out. Well, when I picked up the

Chris Cornell: Off doing a solo tour.



recording sessions. I laugh when I think about all the great early hard rock albums that were recorded in 48 hours... or even 24 hours. This band's second album has dragged on for a year! Maybe Duff and Slash learned one-too-many bad lessons from their old buddy Axl. Lenny
Shaker Heights, OH

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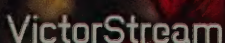
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Metal Happenings

rants, raves,
news & gossip

OZZY: After spending nearly 40 years in the rock and roll meat grinder, you'd think that *nothing* in this world (or the next) could ruffle the well-worn feathers of the Metal Godfather, Ozzy Osbourne. But the fact is that with the release of **XX**, his first solo disc in over six years, the legendary Ozz admits that he's more than a bit nervous. "I've never been the most confident person," he said. "And after putting so much time and effort into this album I am very nervous about the way the fans will react to it. One minute I think it's one of the best things I've ever done, the next minute, I'm not as sure."



VAN HALEN: What a shame it is that what should have been one of the best years of Van Halen's legendary career has turned out to be quite the opposite. First, the band's highly anticipated reunion with original vocalist David Lee Roth quickly ran asunder for a variety of personal reasons. Then the group's induction into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame was marred by Eddie VH's no-show. Oh yeah, Roth, Sammy Hagar and Michael Anthony were all present to see and hear Velvet Revolver pay tribute to their band in song. "This has been a tough time for everyone in and around the band," revealed an inside source. "Much of that disappointment has to do with the degree of optimism that greeted this project when it began last year."

RAGE AGAINST THE MACHINE: So what gives with Rage Against The Machine? Their show at the recent Coachella Music Festival in California was met with rave reviews. Their members (vocalist Zack de la Rocha, guitarist Tom Morello, bassist Tim Commerford and drummer Brad Wilk) are, in the wake of Audioslave's demise, all free of band-related responsibilities. Yet there seems to be a growing unwillingness among these hallowed hard rock veterans to realign their musical fortunes. "We all know that Tom has a solo project that he wants to support," a band confidant revealed. "Perhaps things will get hotter with Rage after that. They've all gotten along quite well, and they seem to all be more-or-less on the same page. Perhaps something will happen... but with these guys, you just never know for sure."

10 HIT PARADER

BREAKING NEWS

ON DEADLINE: SO THERE WE were...relaxing in the venerable Rock Cave when the Bat phone rang. It was our intrepid editor and he gruffly snapped into the phone. "O.K. Next column... explain what's gone so terribly wrong with the music business!" Frankly, we didn't know whether to laugh or cry...

Of course, long-time sufferers of this column know yours truly really was there when Thomas Edison invented the Gramophone...so...the opinions expressed herein should be considered with that in mind. Nevertheless, it's rock's (and the entire music business') dirty little secret. Last year...a billion (with a 'B') songs were illegally downloaded each and every month. Do the math and that's 12 billion a year. Sure, about 600 million CDs were sold in 2006, but sales are down 20% over the last five years and snoops in the industry fear "they've fallen off a cliff" in the last nine months.

We've always subscribed to the rather old-fashioned concept that the creators of the music should receive their fair share or why bother creating in the first place??? After all, writing, performing and producing great music is not something anyone can do off the top of the head.

Should not artists be rewarded for their creative genius? Right now, the entire thing is falling apart. Tower Records was one of our favorite Gotham hangouts. The entire chain is now gone. Will there even *be* a "music industry" a few years from now? Who knows! What is clear, however, is that the media/record companies are in for the fight of their lives. Tragically, it is just way it is!

SECRET STUFF: That stunning rocker stunned everyone who attended her gala soiree out in El Lay when she impulsively pulled out a meth pipe as she approached the awards podium! How the tabloids missed that one is a real kick-in-the-head. Who knows if it'll make the Net???

QUICKIE QUIZ: Last month, we queried, what's the *only* island that is also a continent itself? Correct ans.: Australia...yeah...the same land where Angus and Co. hang their hats. This month, we'll show no mercy. What is the strict origin of the old English phrase "rule of thumb"? This one will take supremo homework!

NO NAMES PLEEZE: Buckingham Palace had its nose in a scandalous snit when a famous English rock band politely declined to accept becoming the Commanders of the British Empire. Amazingly, the whole thing was kept out of the press.

ROCK WIRE REPORT: Marilyn Manson's long-awaited release, *Eat Me, Drink Me*, should be out even as you read these words. It was highly anticipated and rather long in the making, as well. Explained Marilyn, "Last year, I was in such a black hole of depression. I couldn't do anything, I had just lost hope." Tragically, at the very same time, the musician's Mom was struck with a serious illness. Get this, Marilyn wrote *all* of the lyrics Halloween night! Hmmm...Where does the time go dept.: Courtney Love, doing well and looking great, turns 42 on July ninth. Friends swear Frances Bean is a "dead ringer" for Kurt...Ozzy's first in six years, *Black Rain*, is terrific. Pure and simple, His Ozzness has returned to his classic early hard rock metal formula!..

Wasn't it just months ago that your veteran scribbler wrote right here that a merger was "on" between Sirius and XM? It happened weeks after we wrote it and now all SSR's gotta' do is sell it to the FCC...Metallica was thrilled with the offer, so they'll play London's brand new rebuilt Wembley Stadium on the 8th of July. The project cost a cool \$1.6 billion! Sources reveal that lots of new material from the up coming CD will be unveiled...That music man from London town even stunned and astonished his own people with the damage he inflicted on his hotel suite. Lucky for him he is rich and famous!!!

OVER 'N' OUT: Trent Reznor is telling one and all that *Year Zero* is all about "religious dictatorships taking over America." Hmmm...How cheerful. Furthermore, the guiding force behind Nine Inch Nails freely admits that the "Apocalypse is near." We have to say this, it matches up to conspiracy theories right out of the *X Files* and even farther out with all sorts of Orwellian stuff in between.

Gloomiest record we've heard in a long time...Off our chest dept.: Since Grandmaster Flash and the Furious Five are now duly inducted members of the Rock 'n' Roll Hall of Fame...well...will Page and Sabbath and the Stones and Floyd ever be invited to join the Hip Hop Hall of Fame? Don't hold your breath! Sad to say, but the whole thing is rapidly turning into a bad joke...

SEE YOU NEXT MONTH. Until then, remember: *Nothing is ever so permanent as a temporary government program!*



METAL MUSINGS

HEAVEN AND HELL: Many fans have been wondering how the once-delicate internal chemistry of Heaven and Hell has been during that band's recent tour. It is well documented that back early '80s, when they first performed under the Black Sabbath banner, vocalist Ronnie James Dio and guitarist Tony Iommi often found themselves at odds. This time around, however, it seems that the pair couldn't be happier. "We've all grown up a bit over the years," Iommi said. "I don't deny that Ronnie and I shared our differences in the past. But we have seemingly outgrown those—basically because we realize how fortunate we are to have this opportunity to make music together."



NIN: Even those fans who've intensely studied the contents of Nine Inch Nails' new disc, *The Zero Hour*, are scratching their heads about the album's highly controversial contents. Supposedly, the latest masterwork from the ever-inventive mind of Trent Reznor was inspired by a daydream he had—one in which the world comes to an end. So the concept behind *The Zero Hour* developed from there, unraveling like a plot-gone-awry from *The X-Files*. "Trent has told us that the story is set in 2022," said a spokesperson at NIN's label. "It's an amazing—and at times terrifying—look at what the world might be like at that time."

VELVET REVOLVER: Even after being in the most notorious hard rock band of all-time, Gun N' Roses, and having that band sell more than 25 million albums around the world, legendary guitarist Slash admits that he still gets as much of a kick out of making music today as ever before. Indeed, the dreadlocked axe master says that *Libertad*, the new disc from his current band, Velvet Revolver, has excited him as much as anything he's ever been involved with. "There's something about the chemistry of this band that is exciting," he said. "Things are never predictable... which keeps you on your toes. That makes for great music."



MEGADETH: Megadeth's Dave Mustaine has long held a reputation for being a hard man to satisfy... especially when it comes to his own work. Yet, for whatever reason, Dangerous Dave's latest mega-creation, *United Abominations*, has managed to put a smile on his face. "I feel a lot of satisfaction with this album," he said. "A lot of that is because it came together easily, and it sounds the way I wanted it to... fast, heavy and powerful. I also enjoyed myself while we were recording these songs—which is kind of unusual for me. In all, it represents one of the more pleasant, and best, album-making experiences of my life."

LINKIN PARK: It's been four long years since Linkin Park's sophomore studio disc, *Meteora*, solidified this So Cal unit's position as the most successful band currently inhabiting hard rock's rap/metal periphery. Much happened to the group during that time—most importantly a well-documented confrontation with their record label. But with such problems behind them (with both the band and the label now expressing their mutual "love") it seems things are perfectly prepared for the release of *Minutes to Midnight*, the LP pack's new effort. "This album is different for us in almost every way," said vocalist/producer Mike Shinoda. "We spent over a year in the studio, and wrote over 100 songs for this one. We believe the results reflect the amount of effort we put into it."

MARILYN MANSON: While the rock world waits for him to finish work on his latest album, supposedly titled *Eat Me, Drink Me*, the one-and-only Marilyn Manson seems to be busying himself with a variety of non-music related projects. The most interesting of these seems to be a gallery showing of his art which occurred in April down in Ft. Myers, FL. The response to MM's unusual art was said to be rather "mixed", with both art collectors and media critics complimenting his vivid imagination and bold use of color. Keep an ear out for Manson's multi-layered new epic song, *If I Was Your Vampire*, which promises to be the most heavily played track from his new disc.

Nobody could have ever anticipated, upon the release of *Heavy Metal Breakdown* in 1984 by Germany's **GRAVE DIGGER**, that this workmanlike blue-collar trad-metal band would not only survive for 22 years and 14 albums, but actually prosper! Hey, I'll be the first to admit that 2005's *The Last Supper*, 2003's *Rheingold* and 1999's *Excaliber* were average at best, but now, with the war-themed



Liberty Or Death (sounding just right for the times), leather-lunged vocalist Chris Boltendahl, bassist Jens Becker, drummer Stefan Arnold, guitarist Manni Schmidt and keyboardist HP Katzenburg are really on to something. This Locomotive release (distributed Stateside by Ryko) has everything you could ask from trad-metal: guitar riffs galore, a booming bass'n'drum combo, liquid keyboards spilling all over the mix like special effects in a horror movie, and vocals that are not obnoxious. Hey, in this kind of music, vocals are *always* the weak link. Give Chris credit for being endearing, almost. Its 10 tracks in 56:46 has just the right kind of muscle, aggression and testosterone to win any war.

"We made no compromises writing and recording **Cannibal**," says singer/songwriter/guitarist/programmer Wayne Static, prior to the release of **STATIC X**'s fifth album. "It's 12 tracks of pure Evil Disco injected with a big shot of metal. You can expect slamming beats, crushing guitar riffs, shredding guitar solos, and straight-to-the-point vocals that will make your parents scared."

To that end, frontman Static, bassist Tony Campos, original lead guitarist/keyboardist Kolchi Fukuda (back after a four-year absence) and former touring drummer Nick Oshiro (ex-Seether), have carved out a seething chunk of brutality that makes their 1999 *Wisconsin Death Trip* debut sound like Donny and Marie in comparison. Forget 2005's *Start A War* or 2003's *Shadow Zone* or 2001's *Machine*. Static X is valid again. So, for this band that hasn't had the same lineup for two albums in a row yet, it's the first and fifth as far as credibility goes. Albums #2, #3 and #4 are, just, well, static.

Thirteen years in the making, there's finally no denying the metal cred of this L.A. act. You can call **Cannibal** Industrial Thrash if you want. It's actually a little slower, choppy and creepier than traditional thrash has a right to be. So creepy, in parts, in fact, that one song, *No Submission*, was used in the *Saw III* soundtrack.

One of the reasons **Cannibal** sounds so raw and

Metal Happenings

BY: AMY SCIARRETTO

ALL-ACCESS: Who's Doing What... and When:

Former **Limp Bizkit** guitarist Wes Borland has resurfaced in a new band called **Black Light Burns**. No word on exactly what the heck his former bandmate, Fred Durst is doing these days, and, no, we're not initiating a "Bring Fred Durst Back To The Public Eye" campaign, either! We'll let that sleeping dog lie, and we're sure Durst will rear his shaved head one of the days when we least expect it...Orange County's melodic metal masters **Atreyu** are hard at work on their next album, which follows up 2006's **A Death Grip On Yesterday**. The band, who are spending the summer of 2007 as part of the *Family Values* tour, has parted ways with longtime label, Victory Records and has joined forces with Hollywood Records. About the new record, vocalist Alex Varkatzas had this to say, "We're really excited to be working with (producer) John Feldmann. I don't want to give anything away, but we're tossing around all kinds of ideas and are leaving ourselves open to endless possibilities. We are going to challenge ourselves." The new album is scheduled for a late summer release...If you're a collector of action figures and a rabid **KISS** fan, then boy, do we have some great news for you. A Paul Stanley "Star Child" figure is being produced. The pouty-lipped, hairy-chested doll will stand 20 inches tall, and will feature Stanley's Destroyer-era costumes, using such materials as rhinestones and sequins for the



IN THE STUDIO

Exodus continue to write new material, described as "the heaviest we've ever written." The band will hit the studio in May with producer Andy Sneap manning the boards...Swedish melodic death metal overlords Arch Enemy are also working on new material. Drummer Daniel Erlandsson had this to say about the new effort: "It's been a very smooth ride so far. We've recorded a total of 11 new tracks, plus some other extras. The new songs sound very fresh and diverse. Some songs are faster and more extreme than before, while some songs are very heavy and melodic - but they all have the Arch



Enemy imprint in capital letters." The album will be out on Century Media...Speaking of Century Media Records, the LA-based label has signed a spate of new bands, among them At All Cost from Austin, Texas, as well as Suicide Silence, who hail from Riverside, CA. Congrats to both bands and the label on these new partnerships, and expect new albums in the not so distant future...

Emo rockers Thursday have split with Island Def Jam after 2 albums. The band is wrapping up its touring schedule and working on new material, and has had offers from other record labels. We're sure they'll be quickly snatched up by a label that best suits the band's needs.

most real life replication possible! Apparently, sources say this is the most life-like Paul Stanley replica doll ever. If you're interested in this fabulous piece of **KISS** memorabilia, point and click at www.earth.com...San Diego's **As I Lay Dying** have enlisted Killswitch Engage guitarist Adam Dutkiewicz to produce their upcoming third effort for Metal Blade, which is due in the Fall. As for Dutkiewicz, the guitarist/producer is almost fully recovered from back surgery that sidelined him from a few dates on **KSE's** winter tours...Massachusetts metalcore band **Bury Your Dead** have found a new singer in the form of Michael Crafter, an Australian who once fronted the coolly named **I Killed The Prom Queen**, who have an album out on Metal Blade right now. **BYD** drummer Mark Castillo had this to say about the band's new vocalist: "After weeks of practice and hanging out we have decided that Crafter is now our new front man. He's an amazin' dude and put forth a ton of effort to show us he was serious about being apart of BYD. Let the good times roll."

BYD's The Beauty And The Breakdown is out now on Victory Records...Original **Exodus** drummer Tom Hunting has returned to the fold, rejoining the legendary thrash metal band. Guitarist Gary Holt checks in, saying, "It was always understood that when and if Tom was ever ready to resume drumming duties for the band, his seat would be waiting. [Interim drummer] Paul Bostaph always knew this, and was the first to say it upon joining the band. We cannot thank Paul enough for his services on **Shovel Headed Kill Machine** and all the subsequent tours he did to support the album."

See ya next month with more gossip, rumors, and tidbits.

MORE MUSINGS

vital—especially after most metal critics already wrote Static X off—is that Wayne produced it himself (with help from John Travis of Kid Rock and Buckcherry studio fame). Goodbye to longtime producer Ulrich Wild. Plus, Wayne's songwriting has taken a surrealistic phantasmagoric turn. *Reptile*, for instance, is about what it must feel like to be eaten alive." And as far as the title track is concerned, longtime vegetarian Wayne was thinking of "how, when I see people eating these big pieces of meat, it's really disgusting to me. It's like they could be cannibals if you just give 'em a piece of a human and they'd eat it not even knowing the difference. So, with that basic idea in mind, I was able to write the song."

Finland's **BAT-TLELORE** is back again with another epic disc of phantasmagoric metal. **Evernight's** nine tracks in 42:55 are filled with that *Beauty And The Beast* double-vocal style...the clean melodic soothing female vocals of Kaisa Joushki juxtaposed against the rampaging animal grunts of Tomi Mykkanen. It's all to pretty terrific effect as the two-guitar/drums/bass/keyboards keep up a dramatic soundtrack-type adventure all the way through.

Ex-Dream Theater singer Charlie Dominici steps center stage again, but this time in a band named after him, **DOMINICI**, and an album, **03 A Trilogy Part 2**, that's his own concept. Sounding like a mélange of Metallica, Judas Priest and Queen, the



new band—guitarist Brian Maillard, drummer Van Maillard, keyboardist Amerigo Rigoldi and bassist Erik Atzeni—back up the impressive pipes of Dominici with a glorious flair that's immediately evident on opener *The Monster*, which serves as a loose instrumental overture of what's to come. The second of a trio of albums (the first came out in the summer of '05 and the third is in the planning stages now), complete with characters, plot and surprising twists, **03 A Trilogy Part 2** sounds like metal operetta, with driving rampaging rhythms, sound effects, light dialogue in-between tracks amid an overall bombastic delivery that doesn't shirk away from being dramatically over-the-top and totally grandiose. This heady mixture of metal and prog should please fans of both as it's performed with punctilious precision, professionalism and passion.

12 HIT PARADER



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caught in the act

ARMY OF ANYONE

Rob DeLeo was nervous. The strapping, six-foot-plus bass beater for Army of Anyone would never come right out and admit it, but prior to taking the stage for one of his band's initial live shows, he had enough butterflies fluttering through his stomach to fill a mountain meadow on a clear, spring afternoon. Rob's nervousness was understandable. After years of performing in the world's biggest arenas as a vital part of the Stone Temple Pilots (along with his brother and fellow AOA member, guitarist Dean DeLeo), his new outfit found themselves battling to win over a new audience in a decidedly different environment. This group was more than content to perform as an opening act in 3,000 seat theaters (at least for the time being), but Rob sensed that some of the band's followers were still harboring some lingering hostilities regarding STP's demise, and he was hoping that the evening's proceedings would go off without any undue problems.

"I'm obviously very interested in how everyone in going to react to us on stage," he said only minutes before heading out of the band's hectic pre-show dressing room. "I know we all feel very confident about the music, and we're having a great time together—which is really what this band is all about. But I wonder how it will feel the first time someone in the crowd shouts out the title of an STP or Filter song. It may be a little strange. I know Dean and I are ready for anything—and we think Richard is."

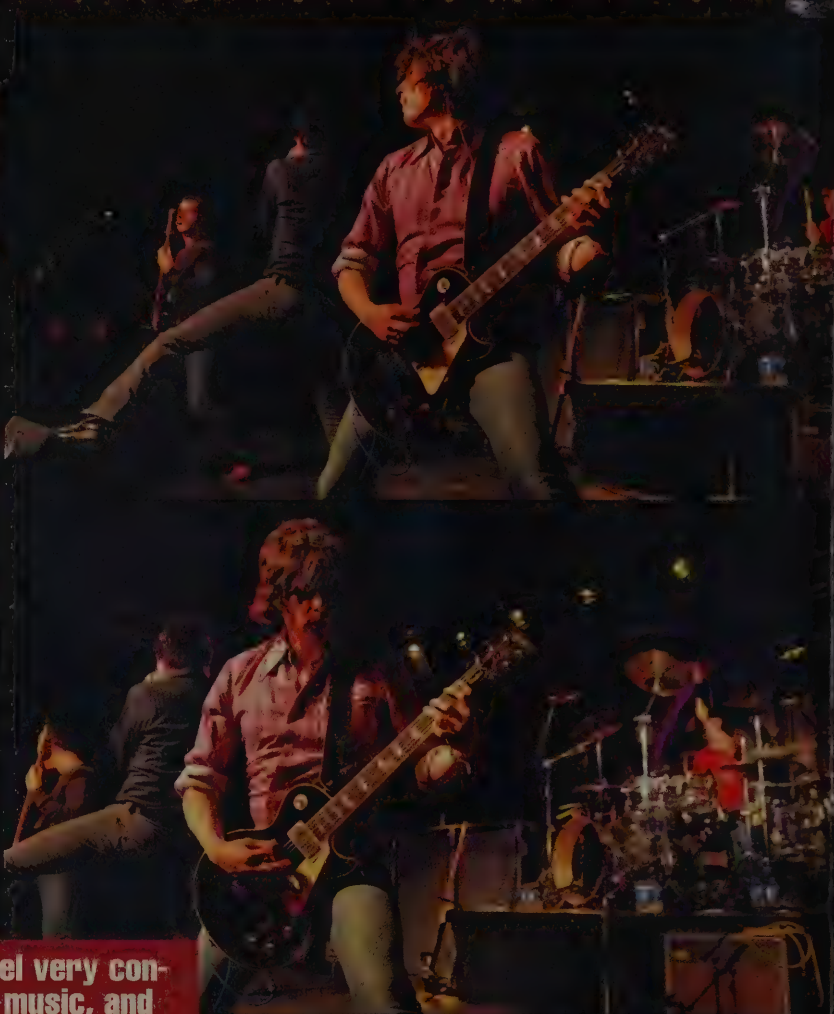
Indeed the Richard is question—Army of Anyone frontman Richard Patrick (formerly of Filter)—was also more than a little nervous, and he wasn't masking his condition anywhere near as well as Rob had been doing. In fact, as he anxiously waited to take the stage, Patrick resembled anything but the picture of confidence. He was sweating, he was pacing, he was chatting quietly with friends, but he insisted to everyone within ear-shot that he was looking forward to getting on stage. And once AOA finally emerged under the spotlight at shortly after 8PM, it was quickly apparent why Patrick was so anxious to get the proceedings underway...this band was *hot*! They cooked from the moment the house lights went down and the stage lights went up, laying down a blistering 40 minute set that highlighted virtually the entire contents of the band's self-titled debut disc—and more!

"The problem we had going on stage was really simple," Rob

"I know we all feel very confident about the music, and we're having a great time together—which is really what this band is all about."

DeLeo said. "We had to figure out how to best utilize one album's worth of material on stage. We like to keep the music relatively tight. We just offered a selection of songs from the album—kind of like a sampler of what we do; it was our way of introducing ourselves and saying 'hello'. All-in-all, it made for a nice set."

With drummer Ray Luzier and Rob DeLeo laying down their powerhouse rhythms and Dean DeLeo providing his customarily high-flying guitar histrionics, Army of Anyone's performance was alternately commanding, mesmerizing and overwhelming. Relying on a minimum of stage tricks,



the band delivered the goods with unfailing accuracy and panache, with the well-schooled Patrick, in particular, proving himself to be more than up for any challenge placed before him. With a singing style that ran from a whisper to a roar, Patrick's powerful voice easily cut through the band's dense instrumental din to provide such songs as *It Doesn't*

Seem to Matter, *A Better Place* and *Dissappear* with a sound that despite some superficial similarities, contrasted markedly from anything STP or Filter had ever put forth. In all, the performance proved to be a triumph on every level, and no one was more relieved about that evening's proceedings than an obviously happy post-show Rob DeLeo.

"It's good to get another one of the early shows out of the way," he said. "I feel really good about the way things went, and I think everyone else does too. I'm particularly happy for the fans. This was as much for them as it was for us. We had a lot of fun up there—which to us is the most important thing there is."

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metal's new stars

POISON THE WELL

"It could have to do with the fact that we're getting older and we are influenced by lots of other things and by other bands then when we were younger and first starting out," says Poison The Well vocalist Jeffrey Morreira about the slight change in sound that marks his Florida band's latest album, *Versions*. "My writing, and I know it's this way for [drummer] Chris [Hornbrook] and guitarist Ryan [Primack], as well, is now affected by movies and books."

PTW are looking to other sources of art for inspiration, and that's what makes *Versions* such a lush, rich, and textured metalcore album that's comprised of fits and starts of singing and screaming. Morreira says that the band isn't afraid of change, or to shake things up a little. And ultimately, it's the fickle fans who'll benefit. "Our live set is always going to be good for the fans, because it will always sound different, because every one of our records has a different, unique sound. It adds lots of color when you see us live, because we play songs from every record," the singer says. "As long as we can write records that don't sound the same, then I will be ok. We have to play the songs, and the kids have to listen to them, and we don't want to get bored and we don't want the fans to get bored, either."

In between the release of 2003's career-defining *You Come Before You* and *Versions*, PTW experienced a flurry of intra-band activity, despite limited touring and exposure. Members came and went, with Morreira, Primack, and Hornbrook remaining as the core songwriting unit for the band. The trio also split from Atlantic Records after only one album.

PTW returned to the indie label fold for *Versions*, choosing to release it through Ferret Music, instead of reuniting with former label, Trustkill. Morreira and PTW have no hard feelings about the break up with Atlantic, and the band came through it as a learning experience. "It was cool to be on a major label for *You Come Before You*," Morreira says. "We got to see what it's really like, and all the things that come with being on a major. After a while, it just ran its course. Things were said, but in the end, they weren't followed through. We were told things that we could do, and some promises weren't fulfilled, so it was time for us to leave and go somewhere we are not pressured to do things we don't want to. And that label was Ferret."

For *Versions*, PTW headed to Sweden to record with Pelle Henricsson and Eskil Lovstro, something they also did for *You Come Before You*. The band feels the duo helps them to craft the best sound possible, and that's why they trek half way across the world to record.

As for the fans, who will notice a bit of a sonic shift on *Versions*, Morreira isn't losing sleep over what their reaction will be. "I have no idea," he admits. "I thought about it for a couple seconds, and then realized that it doesn't bother me. It took so long — it took 3 years — to make this record, and we have had so many problems, and we feel excited about it. I think that's good enough for me."



CHIMAIRA

When it comes to the way for a band to be reborn or to achieve redemption from the hand of the music gods, it's a long haul and back. But coming back, and rising after falling, is the hardest thing to do. And for Chimaira, with *Resurrection*, Chimaira have risen with the utmost poise and grace.

When it came time to knuckle down and write a new record, Chimaira were ready to tackle the challenge. With *Resurrection*, the six-piece have wiped the slate clean and are refreshed and ready to bring their monstrous metal to the masses.

The Cleveland crew have been through a bit of an emotional ringer over the past few years. After the band's last record, *The Impossibility Of Reason*, was met with lukewarm sales, the band was in a desperate situation, desperate to extract itself from its contract with its label.

"We decided to make a record so fantastic that it put a smile on our faces again," says vocalist Mike Hunter, who lives in a condo in his native city. "When we started this band, we wrote music to have fun and to enjoy it. We got that feeling back, and that's how we feel now."

Getting that feeling back probably had something to do with the fact that the band was able to remedy all the problems it was dealing with. Chimaira split with longtime label Roadrunner Records, which released 2001's *Pass Out Of Existence*, 2003's excellent, anthemic *The Impossibility Of Reason* (a phrase cribbed from the movie, *Platoon*), and 2005's self-titled release. Hunter returned to the fold, replacing his replacement, Kevin Talley. Hunter admits that prior to finishing *Resurrection*, he went through the darkest period in his personal life, and he was almost ready to quit the band, but wisely decided against such measures.

Like any untameable, unkillable beast, Chimaira rebounded on the quickfast, signing a deal with Ferret Music, despite having several offers on the table from other interested labels. "We knew we were going to go with Ferret," says Hunter, citing his friendships with several of the company's staffers. "Others were interested, but I didn't want to deal with it. I knew where we wanted to go, and of course, we appreciated the offers, but our minds were made up from the get-go."

Musically, *Resurrection* picks up where Chimaira left off, fusing Hunter's fearsome barks with Rob Arnold's Metallica-influenced riffs. The band also adds the sound with textures and keyboards provided by Chris Spicuzza. "This time, we did a lot of keyboards. We wanted to have the orchestral parts from the last record and the layers that were on *The Impossibility Of Reason*, and that's what he did. On this record, those two elements are more present."

It's the texturing, the layering, and the orchestral sound that helps Chimaira to not sound like their peers. At the end of the day, the band is thrilled with the results, and is ready and willing to keep moving forward. Amen to that!

DISCIPLE

Disciple vocalist Kevin Young is stuck in traffic in Kentucky, where he resides with his wife. While nothing can be more maddening than crawling in a sea of backed up cars, Young isn't feeling the onset of road rage. "The way I see it, I can focus on the answers to your questions, not on the road."



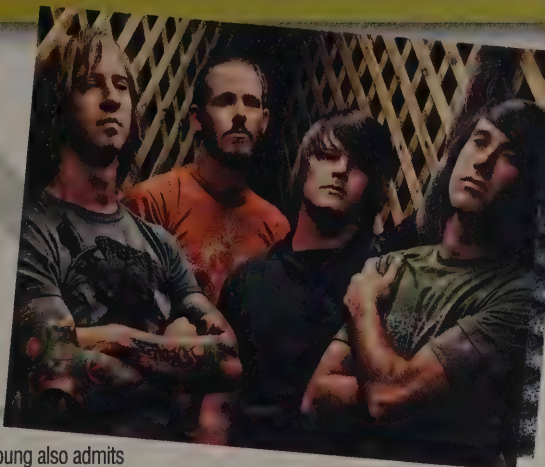
BY: AMY SCIARRETTO

COMING AT YOU SAME QUESTION, DIFFERENT BANDS

Young and Disciple have released *Scars Remain*, an album full of bottom heavy, radio-ready rock anthems and pretty, inoffensive ballads, appear to be positive and upbeat not only when stuck in traffic, but in life and in their music, as well. The band, which has been making a joyful noise since 1993, is decidedly and outwardly Christian.

"We do, for better or for worse, define ourselves as Christian," Young, whose a typically polite, friendly Southerner, admits. Disciple have been working together since they were teenagers, and they were church kids when they started the band. Young continues, "Everyone believes in something. We share a faith and music. Because we happen to be Christians, we get defined as Christian rock." Young also admits that the band doesn't shy away from broaching Christian themes in the band's lyrics. "Every artist, whether it's Eminem or Aerosmith, has something to say, and likes to share himself with the fans. We try to be artful and tasteful, without offending people," he says. That's certainly the safest route for a band with faith-based roots to take, in order to accrue both secular and Christian fans without alienating anyone in the process. And that's something Disciple have learned in their thirteen-year history. "We've been doing this for so long," Young laughs. "We're older. It's a tough business, whether you're 15 or 30 years old, though. We knew we were born to do this, and having that in our hearts help us push through the difficulties. We just need to keep pushing through. There is no end in sight. There will be years to come with Disciple."

But in the present, in the here and now, Disciple are enjoying the spotlight that is being shone on *Game On*, the



screamy, heatseeking single from *Scars Remain*. WWE used the tune as the theme song for a Pay Per View event, and CSI: Miami featured the song in commercials. Additionally, ESPN and Fox Sports are using the song in their highlight reels. Although the song, with the word "game" in its title is now forever connected to sporting events, it was conceived as a song about a much more noble pursuit: the war on terror. Young says that post-September 11 fallout inspired the song. "We were shocked that there are people out there that hated Americans, and we didn't know how to respond," Young states. "The country had been torn apart, and we didn't want to make a political statement about the war in Iraq, but that there is a general war on terror that exists and it has been thrust upon us. As Christians and as Americans, regardless of the faith we ascribe to, we have a moral obligation to defend our families. It's not a Republican fight song, but an American fight song, about standing up and defending ourselves, without spreading hate."

Young is quick to point out that Disciple are not a political band. Rather, they just want to write good, catchy, memorable songs.

CAR BOMB

Car Bomb are hardly your average extreme metal band. Wanna know why? Okay, we've got a few reasons. Car Bomb vocalist Mike Daffner is currently pursuing a doctorate in physics. While musicians with PhD's isn't as rare as you may think—Offspring's

Dexter Holland, who actually declined to finish his in order to focus on his band, and Bad Religion's Greg Graffin are two that quickly come to mind—it's not often that you find a musician in a spastic, schizophrenic grindcore band with that advanced of a degree. You'd think doctoral candidates would spend more time espousing esoteric theories, as opposed to rocking the hell out. But such is not the case with Car Bomb.

But when you boil things down, you realize that it make sense. Car Bomb's music on *Centralia* is smart; it's technical and precisely played, almost like a rene-gade form of jazz. You could call Long Island's Car Bomb grindcore surgeons; as in, they do everything with a careful hand. "There are faster, more tech-sounding bands," says bassist Jonny Modell, who owns and operates his own computer consulting business on the side. "But we have a signature sound. A lot of guitar players and musicians who have heard our music always tell us that they like the guitar work. [Guitarist] Greg [Kubacki] likes to doodle with sounds, and we don't use one tone through the album. He likes to do ambient stuff."

Centralia is the band's Relapse Records debut. The album title references an old coal mining city in Western Pennsylvania that has been burning for years. Also, the album is also what we like to call "dose metal"; that is, it's so extreme and cage-rattling that you can only handle it in carefully administered doses. Modell is okay with that assessment, saying "I personally like listening to the album from start to finish." Even though the band recorded the record on their own, he's still not exhausted from creating and playing it! "I am okay with it still," he says with a laugh.

Despite the uber extreme nature of Car Bomb's music, Modell is convinced the record can appeal to all fans of heavy music. "We have different styles going together on our album, and we can appeal to many different genres within the metal, punk and hardcore scene."

Touring is a popular subject/topic in each issue's "Coming At You" column. That's because the bands we cover make their money by living on the road, coming to your city, and winning you over. In celebration of life on the road, we decided to twist things around a little, and we polled the musicians below and asked the simple question: What's the best thing about your home town? Apparently, there's no place like home...

CHIMAIRA, Mark Hunter

The bitter Cleveland winters certainly have an affect on Chimaira's music, especially on their latest effort, *Resurrection*. Here, the music is as angry and agitated as a grizzly bear awoken from his winter hibernation two months too early. Vocalist Mark Hunter weighs in on his hometown, and it's sphere of influence on the music it produces, beyond his own.



"The weather in Cleveland affects your mood, and helps the writing process," Hunter admits. "It's dark and grey, so winter is the perfect time to write an album, at least for us. There is no sunshine or happiness, and it definitely sets the mood." Hunter is quick to point out that Nine Inch Nails guru Trent Reznor grew up in Cleveland, and that all you need to do is listen to classic NIN records if you want to experience what Cleveland is like or how it influences its musicians. "Those early NIN records, you can definitely tell something is wrong," Hunter says. We know. We've heard those records, and we "get" it.

DISCIPLE, Kevin Young

Disciple recently released *Scars Remain*, a hard charging rock and roll opus with a surprisingly uplifting spirit. We asked vocalist Kevin Young, a polite, charming southerner, to expand on what he loves about being from the South. You know what they say: American by birth, Southern by the grace of God.

"Everything," the singer says. "There is no 'best.' It's the food, the women, the sports. Those are all the greatest things here. I came back from a trip to New York City, and there were plenty of beautiful people there, but I realized that there's nothing like Southern girls! And in the South, we love our football, college football, especially! You name it! All these rednecks from Alabama, Arkansas, and Tennessee all love their college football." Other than the ladies and the football teams, that populate the region, Young says that Southerners are always willing to lend a helping hand, as well, and that makes the area special. He says, "If you need anything, you call one of us. Southerners will help you out." Good to know, especially when you've got a flat tire!

THE HUMAN ABSTRACT, Nathan Ellis

Los Angeles-based band The Human Abstract



COMIN' AT YOU SAME QUESTION, DIFFERENT BANDS

perspectives, Fu Manchu stand as a band clearly caught amid conflicting cultural perspectives. In look, sound and attitude, the unit comprised of Hill, guitarist Bob Balch, drummer Scott Reeder and bassist Brad Davis seem more like a throwback from the "flower power" '60s than a representative of cutting-edge 21st Century ideals. Their hair is long and shaggy, their clothes look like Salvation

Amy relics, and their sound is... well, their sound is simply the most overwhelming cascade of volume this side of an exploding volcano. Yet, despite

their out-of-time perspectives, as they've continually proven over the last decade on such discs as *Daredevil*, *In Search Of...*, *The Action Is Go* and *California Crossing*, this is a band with a keen sense of awareness regarding exactly who and what they are.

But don't be completely fooled by this group's rough and ready sound. While their approach obviously pays unabashed homage to such metal pioneers and Black Sabbath, Mountain and Blue Cheer, it also manages to capture all the energy and excitement that continues to make hard rock the most commercially successful form of music in the world. And though their approach is obviously a far cry from the angst-driven, shock rock sounds that dominate today's hard rock scene, the music of Fu Manchu has been warmly embraced by the media as if it were some long-lost love. In fact, it seems as if these free-wheeling rockers may just serve as another spearhead in a metal renaissance designed to introduce a new generation of fans to the wonders of fuzz pedals, distorted blues-based guitar solos and mind-numbing power riffs. Just don't try to lay any such pressure-packed responsibility on these space cowboys—they're too busy kickin' back and just playin' some rock and roll to deal with any of that.

have been buzzing in the press for about a year now, since the release of their debut, *Nocturne*, which combines noodly guitar work with classical song structures. The City Of Angels is also known as the City Of Broken Dreams, a city that no one calls home, but where everyone comes to try and make it big in the entertainment businesses that are headquartered there. But THA's vocalist Nathan Ellis begs to differ, and views Los Angeles as a city of opportunity, especially when it comes to his band. "The best thing about LA is the fact that a record deal was obtainable," he says. "I grew up in Nashville, which is a magic town, because the local music scene is amazing, and so many kids who live there were children of fantastic session musicians, so it was a thriving local music scene, but it's impossible to get a record deal there. It's an amazing community, but getting signed is difficult." Ellis eventually moved out to California, and saw "all these garage bands were getting record deals! It's a different game here." THA eventually secured a deal with Hopeless Records, and have watched their career move at an accelerated, exciting clip ever since. Ellis and THA are happy in their current situation, and want to keep on growing and moving up. "The question is, once you get signed, can you stay afloat? I have been training for this my whole life, so I hope so!" the singer says.

JOB FOR A COWBOY, Ravi Bhadriraju

Job For A Cowboy, who hail from the hot, dry desert that is Arizona, secured a record deal with Metal Blade, despite that fact that their eldest member is just 20 years old. Youth and inexperience aside, JFAC are the real deal—playing uber-aggressive, highly technical death metal on *Genesis*, their label debut. Guitarist Ravi Bhadriraju appears to be a philanthropist, sort of, with his answer to our question.

"The best thing about Arizona is the people," Bhadriraju says. "I love my friends and my family, and that's the best thing I have right now." See, rock stars are real people, just like the rest of us.

FUNERAL FOR A FRIEND, Ryan Richards

Funeral For A Friend is the only band that we polled in this edition of "Coming At You" that hails from a country other than the good ole US of A. FFAF are from Wales, which is across the pond and part of The United Kingdom. Even though FFAF are miles away from US soil, they still make some of the most exhilarating screamo we've heard in years, and the band is huge in its native country. *Tales Don't Tell Themselves* will be out later this year, and we caught up with guitarist Ryan Richards and asked him about what makes Wales worth coming home to. "I am looking out my window right now," Richards says. "I live in a valley, where I grew up, and for anyone who hasn't seen it, it's got the most beautiful landscape and green hills anywhere. It's so much different now. When I was growing up, I took it for granted. Then I went on tour for six months and was like, 'Whoa!' I never realized how beautiful this place was until I left and came back." Again, Dorothy from Wizard Of Oz said it best. There's no place like home!

PICK HIT—FU MANCHU

Trying to describe the sound created by Fu Manchu is akin to trying to explain the sound of a roaring freight train to a deaf man. Quite simply, it's something you have to *experience* in order to fully comprehend. It's a sound centered on its power, its energy and its pure, unadulterated volume. As shown throughout their latest album, *We Must Obey*, these So Cal "stoner rock" masters have once again cranked their amps to "10" and created a sonic roar that seems destined to loosen tooth fillings and crumble building foundations where ever their music is played. While in fact, such songs as *Knew It All Along* and *Hung Out to Dry* show a somewhat more accessible side of Fu Manchu's heavy-handed rock vocabulary, there's no denying that the band's tenth career opus roars with the kind of straight-from-the-gut brand of punk-meets-metal energy too rarely heard in today's hard rock circles.

"I don't know if I'd use the word 'accessible' for our new stuff," said guitarist/vocalist Scott Hill. "Maybe it's a little less out-there. In some places we've tried a few new things, but at its core this album keeps us on the same musical highway that's been our home for a long time. It's the place where we truly feel we belong."

As today's heavy music movement continues to expand its already diverse



SHOOTING STARS—FOSTERCHILD

Trends may come and trends may go. What's hot on a Wednesday may be old news by the weekend. Faces plastered prominently on national magazine covers may quickly evolve into future answers for "where are they now?" questions of *Trivial Pursuit*. But as so many things in our modern world continue to evolve at a dizzying pace, one clear-cut constant has emerged... the fact that great rock and roll is timeless. A solid guitar hook, a stick-to-your-brain melody, and an impassioned vocal outburst sounded great in 1977... and they still sound great three decades later. The guys in the exciting new hard rock unit Fosterchild not only know the truth behind that time-tested axiom, on their self-titled debut disc they prove it loudly and clearly.

"When you say that you're a rock and roll band that should mean something," said band founder/drummer Kevin Miller, who comes to Fosterchild after spending nearly a decade pounding the skins for platinum-covered rockers, Fuel. "I think that term has lost a bit of its edge over the last few years, and that's really too bad. We're out to show that you don't always need to follow the latest trend in order to make great music. You can stick to the basics and still get the job done—especially if you approach what you're doing the right way."

The right way, indeed. In addition to Miller's lengthy hard rock history, Fosterchild's other members share a similarly distinctive pedigree. Guitarist Brian Quinn cut his rock and roll teeth writing and recording with Philadelphia-based rockers Octane. And both bassist Eric Leonhardt and vocalist Danny Beissel paid their dues in a variety of projects before uniting their creative forces behind the Fosterchild-wheel. But this is one band that its members will quickly acknowledge is greater than the sum of its individual parts. While each of these guys may be a talented, road-tested rock and roll veteran, when they come together under their collective banner, they're a pure rock and roll machine.

"One of the best things about having some experience is that you know what you are... and you know what you're not," Quinn said. "Maybe our brand of whiskey-soaked rock and roll isn't what some people perceive as being 'cool' at the moment. But it's the music we like, and there's always been an audience for that kind of sound. We've managed to put a new twist on things—while staying true to what we believe in as musicians."

As shown throughout their self-titled debut EP, Fosterchild's "belief" in their traditional rock and roll principles shine through with every note they play and every word they sing. On songs such as *Let Me Down*, *Too Far Gone* and *Real*, this energetic quartet show that while they're as far removed from rock's cutting edge as a Republican senator, housed within their strident licks and from-the-gut vocal forays are the key ingredients for creating "classic" hard rock—most importantly riffs that get your head bobbing and your foot tapping. And while the members of Fosterchild know that it's still gonna be a long way to the top if they wanna rock and roll, with their heady blend of talent and experience, they all believe they're up for the challenges that lie ahead.



Symphony X

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7/16 - The Medley in Montreal, QC
7/17 - The Theatre Imperial in Quebec City, QC
7/18 - The Opera House in Toronto, ON
7/20 - Peabody's in Cleveland, OH
7/21 - I-Rock in Detroit, MI
7/22 - The Pearl Room in Mokena, IL
7/23 - Pop's in Sauget, IL
7/24 - Station 4 in St. Paul, MN
7/27 - El Corazon in Seattle, WA

7/28 - Roseland Grill in Portland, OR
7/29 - Slim's in San Francisco, CA
7/30 - House of Blues in Anaheim, CA
7/31 - House of Blues in West Hollywood, CA
8/01 - The Clubhouse in Tempe, AZ
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HP reviews the latest CDs & DVDs

Each month we like to put two of our top **Hit Parader** staffers in a room with a stack of new releases. Sometimes they agree on the quality of these recent arrivals—more often, they don't. Either way, we call this exercise in musical futility **Collision Course**.

VELVET REVOLVER, *LIBERTAD*

At times over the last few months it seemed as if Velvet Revolver's second album, *Libertad*, would *never* get finished. It's been well over three years since this supergroup's debut disc rocked the world with its classic-rock feel and tough-guy attitude. But now these former members of Guns N' Roses and STP have further unified their artistic front, presenting a collection of songs that at key moments shy away slightly from the strident sounds that characterized their hallowed past to present a more diversified and contemporary front. Make no mistake about it—this stuff will still rock you to your very core, but housed within VR's new disc is a level of maturity and focus that takes each of these gristled music veterans to a new creative plateau.

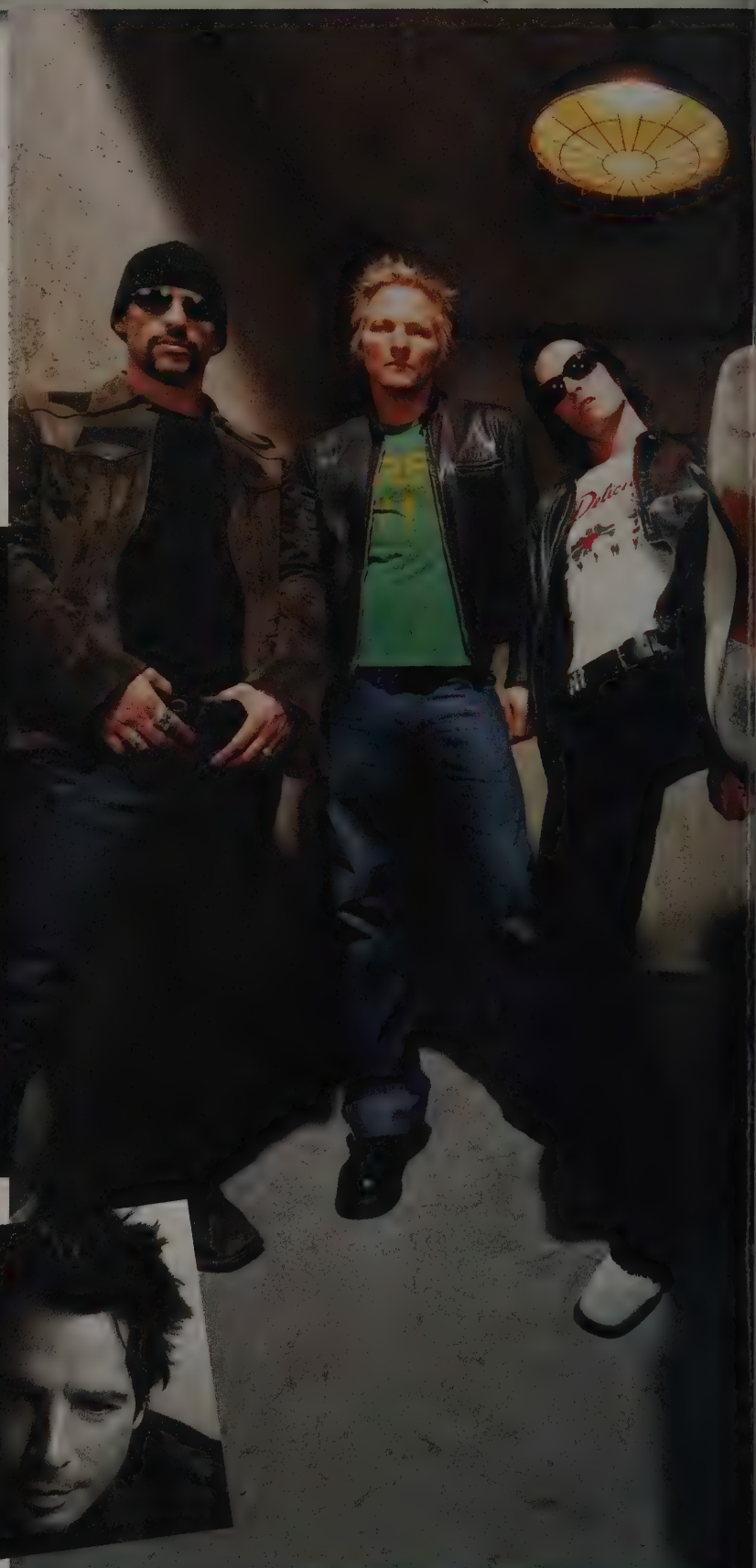
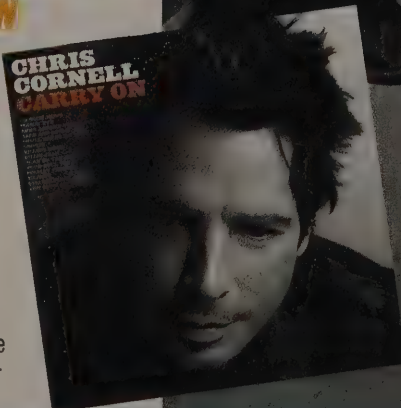
RATINGS: *****

We're supposedly living in a New Age for rock and roll. A new generation of bands have come along with a divergent musical sensibility and a different set of perspectives and influences. Just don't try to convince any of the members of Velvet Revolver of that. These guys—who collectively have been toiling on the hard rock battlefield for nearly a century—seem mired in the thoughts and methods of the '80s and '90s. And while they manage to present their music with a pure-bred talent that few other acts can ever hope to match, I can't shake the notion that I've heard all of this before in one form or another.

RATINGS: ****

CHRIS CORNELL, *CARRY ON*

So *this* is what spurred Chris Cornell to turn his back on the multi-platinum partnership he had created in Audioslave. Certainly the contents of *Carry On* is worthy of the man called by many "the best rock voice of his generation." But much like his previous solo disc (which emerged during his time between Soundgarden and Audioslave), here it seems as if Cornell is a tad too determined to be all things to all people. When he rocks, he rocks hard; and when he tones it down for a characteristic ballad, the emotion seems to drip out of your stereo speakers. Of course, there are those who insist that Cornell needs a band environment in which to prosper—that his fellow





musicians will often control his desire to wander too far from the hard rock core. Here some of Cornell's best and worst creative instincts have been given free reign, with decidedly mixed results.

RATINGS: ***

I always loved Chris Cornell during his '90s stint in Soundgarden. I found him much more hit-or-miss during his recent star-studded run with Audioslave. On his own, I was most curious to see if he would return to his cutting-edge roots or further court the mainstream audience he seemed to woo with his recent *James Bond* soundtrack hit. As it turns out, the contents of *Carry On* finds Cornell trying his hardest to skirt both worlds while pandering to neither. While many of these songs could easily fit into Audioslave's song book (in fact, it was rumored that he left that band because he felt he was contributing too much to their creative process while having to equally share their spoil of riches), there are just enough marked differences to make this stand out as something fresh. Hey, you just know that if you've enjoyed Cornell's previous work, you're gonna eat this up like a piece of chocolate cake!

RATINGS: ***

OSZY OSBOURNE, *BLACK RAIN*

It's been six looong years since Ozzy Osbourne's last solo disc, *Down to Earth*, further cemented his reputation as the Metal Godfather. During that time he's done a series of high-profile tours with Black Sabbath... but scant little recording of new material. But now, with a new home studio located right in his Beverly Hills backyard, the legendary Ozz has finally delivered the goods—and they quickly prove to be worth waiting for! With long-time guitar maestro Zakk Wylde laying down a dizzying array of heavy-handed licks—especially on such tracks as *Countdown's* *Begun* and *Not Going Away*—Ozzy has constructed a disc that stacks up well against anything he's done during his hallowed career. Sure, his voice no longer possesses the range of timbre of his youth, but his sneering monotone is put to good use throughout this collection on which the Ozz truly puts the pedal back to the metal.

RATINGS: ****

The sad-but-true fact is that these days more people probably know Ozzy Osbourne for his famed *MTV* reality show than for his music making skills. That's what happens when you take six years between releasing albums. Sadly, these days Ozzy seems to be a pale imitation of the rabble-raising, hell-bent, chemical-fueled metal madman of yore. And while his new music still occasionally provides hints of the rock and roll mayhem that used to be his calling card, those moments are few and far between. Still, it's fun to hear Ozzy croak his way through some new songs—which in lyrical content touch on everything from the War in Iraq to the past health problems suffered by his wife/manager, Sharon.

RATINGS: ***

THE INDIES

BY AMY SCJARRETTO

FIREWIND

Allegiance (Century Media)

If you're a fan of Euro metal, then the name Gus G. should ring a bell. The guitarist has served time in notable, guitar-driven bands like Nightrage and Arch Enemy, but Firewind is his baby.



Allegiance is bombastic, larger-than-life metal, replete with big, sing-along choruses, and pump-your-fist-in-the-air power metal energy. If you are all about power metal, then *Allegiance* and Firewind will suit your fancy, because all the hallmarks (keyboards, huge 'n hooky choruses, and lightning' quick riffs and solos) are here. But this Greek quintet keeps things from getting cheesy, due in large part to the proficient, astonishingly skilled guitarwork that peppers *Allegiance*. One needn't look any further than the title track or *Ready To Strike* for evidence of the talent and skill of Gus G.

STARS: **

FOR FANS OF: Iron Maiden, Dragonforce, Iced Earth

MACHINE HEAD

The Blackening (Roadrunner)

Machine Head returned to form on 2004's *Through The Ashes Of Empires*, after 2001's questionable *Supercharger*. Fans of this neo-trash band can breathe a sigh of relief that they've remained on the path of TTAOE with *The Blackening*. With its 10-minute songs, *The Blackening* is reminiscent of the band's 1997 release, ...*The More Things Change*. The band truly knocks it out of the park, tearing at your ears with a complete and total, neo-thrash assault and signature, harmonic guitar tones. *Clenching The Fists Of Dissent* is a call to arms (complete with a gang vocal and a chant!) while *Halo* is a powder keg that's about to blow, so stand back! *The Blackening* isn't all fists and fury, though; thankfully, this Northern Cali band knows how to play with melody and how to repeat patterns, and these songs— not just the riffs and beats—linger in your brain for days. Another chapter of Machine Head has opened with *The Blackening* and we'll be sure to stick around till the book is finished.

STARS: ***

FOR FANS OF: Lamb Of God, Trivium, Testament, Metallica

CHIMAIRA

Resurrection (Ferret)

It must be the bitter cold Cleveland winters that inspire the riotous rage on Chimaira's

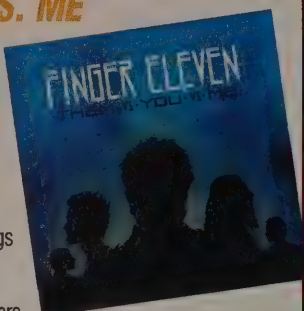


FINGER ELEVEN, THEM VS. YOU VS. ME

Finger Eleven has long been a personal fave of this reporter, simply because they're one of the few bands capable of writing superlative songs and delivering them in tight, succinct burst of pure hard rock energy. While at times they may play a little too tightly on the listeners heartstrings (such as with their recent single *Paralyzer*) throughout *Them vs. You vs. Me* these Canadian rockers

seem to draw direct influence from the success of fellow Great White North chart-toppers, Nickelback, while proudly sticking to their own rock and roll guns.

RATINGS: ***



Okay, I'll admit it. This is one of those albums that someone with a sick sense of humor handed me to review. I don't like the person who stuck me with this assignment. I don't like this kind of music. I don't like Finger Eleven. There, I said it. This is the brand of slick, calculated stuff that a computer could have generated. This is soul-less, heart-less, taste-less music, which means that it'll probably sell a zillion copies and turn these boys into international superstars. Go figure!

RATINGS: **

LORDI, THE AROKALYPSE

Okay... where to begin? Lordi kind'a look like a cross between Slipknot, Kiss and those creepy aliens you sometimes see on those *Discovery Channel* UFO shows. They kind'a sound just the way they look. There's no question that this Helsinki-based metal unit (who somehow won the prestigious 2006 Eurovision Song Contest—an event, by the way, previously won by the likes of ABBA and Celine Dion) desperately want to court the same kind of fanatical fan base that our aforementioned metal legends have garnered. And while *The Arockalypse* has certain moments that indicate that Lordi could emerge as an international success story, for the most part they come across as a weak imitation of their influences.

RATINGS: ****

Lordi surprised me. When I first put *The Arockalypse* into my CD player, I expected the worst. And at first, that's exactly what I got. But I stuck it out, and before long I developed a certain affinity for this unit's Kiss-style, sing-along anthems. While this disc would have been better suited for release in 1987 rather than 2007, perhaps there is still a place in the rock world for a band as blatantly obvious as Lordi.

RATINGS: ***



THE INDIES

Resurrection. Chimaira have parted ways with their longtime label, Roadrunner, but they've not missed a beat since switching over to Ferret Music. While *Resurrection* is not as anthemic as their best album, 2003's *The Impossibility Of Reason*, the album does contain its fair share of stampeding guitar solos, and the lyrical and vocal terror of Mark Hunter, who sounds like a metal version of Sam Kinison. Most of the stompy songs on *Resurrection* exceed the five-minute mark, and Chimaira fills each song with choppy, machine-gunned riffs and subtle layers provided by keyboardist/backing vocalist Chris Spicuzza. The songs aren't very structured, and that may very well be the band's intent; however, there's enough metal to get the adrenaline pumping to dangerous levels. Recommended tracks: *Resurrection*, *The Flame*, *Killing The Beast*.

STARS: ***

FOR FANS OF: Machine Head, Unearth, Slayer

THE END Elementary (Relapse)

You're probably sick of us here at *HIT Parader* singing the

praises of Relapse Records as one of the best sources of independent, extreme heavy metal. Well, get your puke bucket out, because we're about to get back up on our soapbox and glorify this impressive label once more.

thanks to the release of The End's *Elementary*. The End traffics in complex, slightly progressive and technical metal, but they never drift too far off course into unlistenable territory, thanks to their ability to use patterns and repetition in their songs, something that many of their peers often forget. *Elementary* opens with *Dangerous*, a six-minute gem built on a tribal, percussive drumbeat that will remind more mainstream listeners of Tool, and this tense, murky song could easily serve as the background music in a movie where the protagonists are traipsing through the jungle. *The Never Ever Aftermath* is foreboding

ing, thanks to its Tool-esque riffing, and urgent, ominous guitar tones. Ultimately, *Elementary* is the metal underground's answer to Tool's *Lateralus*.

STARS: ***

FOR FANS OF: Tool, Mastodon, Dillinger Escape Plan

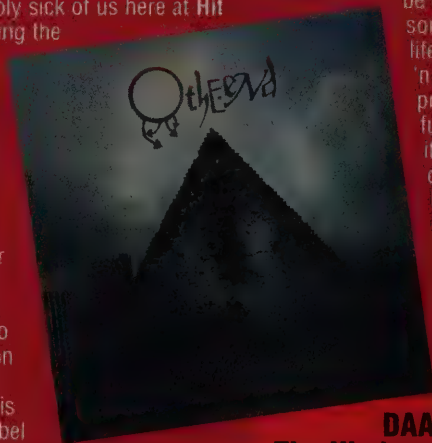
ILL NINO The Under Cover Sessions (Cement Shoes)

New Jersey's Latin metal sensations Ill Nino have parted ways with Roadrunner, but they've quickly bounced back with *The Under Cover Sessions*, a 5-song EP with two new songs, *Arrasta* and *Reservation For Two*, both of which combine the band's patented tropical, 2-person percussion backbone with down tuned, chunked out riffs and Cristian Machado's sing-scream vocal split personality. The other 3 songs are ambitious covers of Faith No More's *Zombie Eaters*, which features Deftones' Chino Moreno, Peter Dinklage's *Red Rain*, and Nirvana's *Territorial Pissings*. The band glazes each song with Latin flavor, which is to

be expected, breathing some unexpected new life into them. The slow 'n serious *Red Rain* is probably the EP's most fun moment, because it's so surprising of a cover. All in all, *The Under Cover Sessions* is a nice taste of what's to come.

STARS: ***

FOR FANS OF: Korn, Deftones, Latin rock



DAATH

The Hinderers (Roadrunner)

Atlanta's Daath push the death metal envelope on their debut, *The Hinderers*. While the choppy, mid-tempo riffs are a throwback to the mid-'90s, when death metal was in its heyday, and the gutturally growled vocals could chill the spine of even the surliest and burliest metalhead, the band is highly conceptual in its lyrics, referencing Jewish mysticism throughout much of *The Hinderers*. Standout tracks include *Subterfuge*, *From The Blind*, *Cosmic Forge*, and *Ovum*.

STARS: ***

FOR FANS OF: Opeth, Arch Enemy

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Marilyn Manson

Good Times...
Bad Times

BY TIM ABBOTT

"If everything I did was predictable, there wouldn't be much fun in it."

Marilyn Manson plans on making 2007 one of the busiest years of his life. He's already opened his own art gallery in Los Angeles, performed a co-starring (and directing) turn in the flick *Phantasmagoria: The Visions of Lewis Carroll*, and finished recording tracks for his new album, *Eat Me, Drink Me*. It's not that Manson necessarily *planned* on making this such an active time in his ever-unpredictable life.... it just kind'a worked out that way.

"There have been a number of very exciting ideas running through my mind," he said. "And it happened that a number of them came to fruition at roughly the same time. The plan to direct the movie had been in the works for a while, and it's time that I make a new album. It's all a little overwhelming, but I'm enjoying it."

So with the theatrical, musical and artistic aspects of his career all entering new phases of notoriety, exactly where does Marilyn Manson go from here? Three years after completing his most recent world tour—in support of his moderately well-received disc, *The Golden Age of Grotesque*—it seems that this wildman rocker is more focused and determined than at any previous time during his decade of rock and roll decadence. Indeed, in recent days the music wires seem to be positively buzzing with Manson-related scuttlebutt, all indicating that this master of the macabre will soon be injecting his unique perspectives back onto the American psyche as only he can. No matter what his next step may be, however, it now appears that 2007 represents the latest chapter in the media circus that has so often characterized Manson's meteoric career.

"If everything I did was predictable, there wouldn't be much fun in it," Manson said. "I always welcome the chance to explore different sides of my creative personality, and if those come on stage or on screen really doesn't matter to me. I want it all!"

The undeniable fact is that whether the subject is music, art or film, when Marilyn Manson speaks, people still listen. Despite what some would claim is his diminishing commercial appeal and apparent refocusing of his creative priorities, this tall, thin 36 year-old Florida-bred freakazoid has managed to continually astound the rock world with both his outrageous appearance and his equally outrageous "shock-art" stance. But lurking underneath the semi-Satanic mystique he's created (he takes great pleasure, for instance, in the fact that his new art emporium is located at 667 Melrose Ave.), and hiding behind those multi-colored eyes that shoot fire into the hearts of his ever-loyal followers, is a guy who has mastered every trick in the rock and roll book.

Don't for one second believe that this isn't one incredibly savvy, highly intelligent rocker-in-devil's clothing. MM knows his album sales figures to the last digit. He knows his concert revenues to the final decimal point. He knows how many magazine covers he's generated down to the date and location. Make no mistake about it, Marilyn Manson knows *exactly* what he's doing; he's carefully calculated each word he utters and each gesture he makes for maximum societal impact. He knows that every headline he grabs for his off-stage behavior may translate into an additional album or movie ticket sale. And he knows that each cry of outrage voiced against him may result in more notoriety for his new art gallery. They're all just part of this ever-evolving corporate "empire" known to the world as Marilyn Manson.

"My challenge is challenging myself," he said. "When you become predictable, or stop being willing to push yourself, that's when you run the risk of becoming conservative. All I want to do now is feel satisfied with my artistry and try to wake up everyone who's still asleep out there."

While Manson continues to grapple with both his attempts to awaken this "sleeping" generation and invigorate his own musical musings, he now confronts a new dilemma—that of ever-changing fan expectations. As he prepares to release his next multi-media projects he realizes that merely making shocking, ground-breaking artistic statements in a variety of

forums will no longer suffice. Marilyn Manson remains—perhaps unwittingly, perhaps not—the spokesman for his Lost Generation, that group of kids who see their hopes, dreams and frustrations being unanswered by the 21st Century American Power Structure. In Manson they still envision a savior, a tattooed beat messiah who through his deeds, words and actions can lead them to the "promised land" of self-respect and self-belief. To them Manson isn't some misguided musical soul—rather he is their heavy metal Moses, guiding them through the desert of apathy, hatred and despair. To these fans Manson's next creative statement—whether it is music, film or one of his highly acclaimed paintings—will be more than a mere artistic happening. It will be their call to arms.

"The most difficult thing for me is maintaining my own beliefs while satisfying what the fans want from me," he said. "But I'm not the first performer who has faced that kind of challenge, and I'm sure I won't be the last. We're all operating in a very changeable medium. I like to view myself as the kind of performer who first inspired me when I was a kid. But I'm also the first to realize that it's not the same for me as it was when I was a fan. I mean there aren't bands today that do for me what Kiss or Black Sabbath did when I was a kid."

While he is still drawn to artists who—very much like himself—continue to push the barriers of accepted public taste, there's no denying that Manson also feels a need to be embraced and accepted by the masses. His film, art and musical efforts may seem decidedly uncommercial at times, but there's no denying that this always-clever rocker wants to make a major mark on the entertainment world, and with his ever-expanding scope of projects, it seems certain that over the ensuing years Marilyn Manson will solidify his position as one of this era's most note-worthy and notorious creative forces.

"20 years from now, I'd like to at least make it into one of those 'where are they now' newspaper columns," he said. "I think that would be a great way to be remembered."



MARILYN MANSON

ARMY OF ANYONE

AN OPEN INVITATION

BY WILLIAM BANKS

When you've been to the rock and roll mountain top, you always want to go back for the view. Such has certainly been the case in recent days for former Stone Temple Pilots brothers Dean (guitar) and Robert (bass) DeLeo and ex-Filter frontman Richard Patrick as they work overtime to make the music world respond to their exciting new project, *Army of Anyone*. Along with noted session drummer Ray Luzier, this unit—who in their previous bands sold over 15 million albums over the last decade—has pulled out all the stops in order to make the rock community sit up and take notice of their diverse hard rock attack. And while things have yet to take off to the stratospheric commercial heights that many had predicted for this latter-day supergroup, that doesn't mean that these veteran rockers have lost one bit of confidence in their band, their music, or themselves. Just one listen to *Army of Anyone* is enough to convince anyone with ears that this is one band that can do it all—rock out with the best of 'em, and then shift gears to deliver emotive, powerful odes. Recently we caught up with Dean DeLeo to get the inside word on *Army of Anyone*.

Hit Parader: The rock world is certainly different in 2007 than it was back in 1997 at the peak of STP's acclaim. Do you feel that's impacting *Army of Anyone*?

Dean DeLeo: Not really. The fans are still there, and that's the important thing. There's no question that it's a very different industry now. The technology has taken over in some ways, and it's presented a problem for record labels and other people who didn't see it coming. But when you're a musician you really can't focus on any of that. It's your job to go out there and make the best music you can, and that's exactly what motivates *Army of Anyone*. This is a band where there are no limits—anything you can think up can be put into play because the musicians are good enough and our ambitions are never limited.

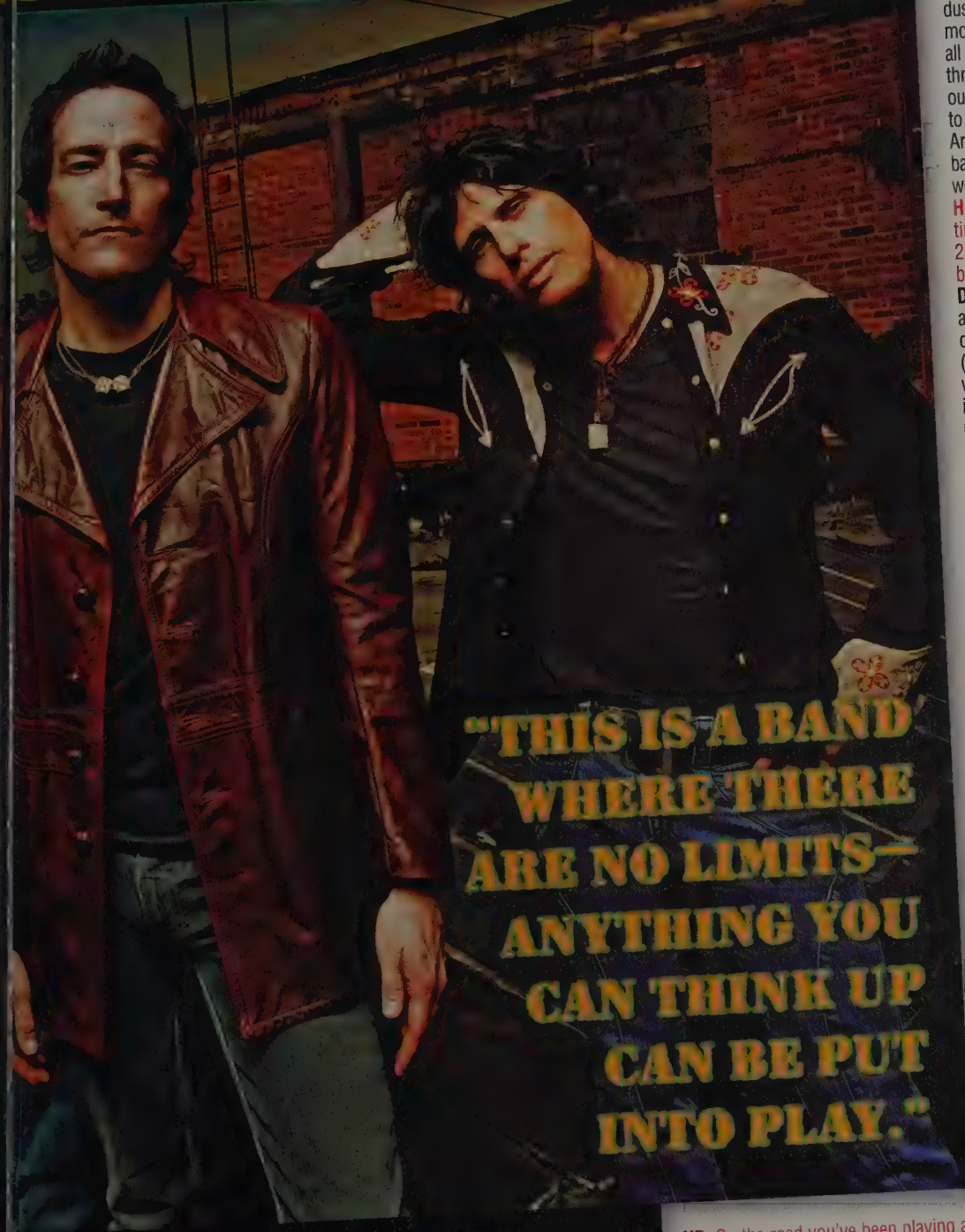
HP: Let's go back a while. Explain how *Army of Anyone* came together.

DD: Rob and I had known Richard for a long time—we toured together when STP and Filter hit the road at some point back in the late '90s. We hit it off right away on both a personal and professional level. It was one of those friendships that you really welcome in this business—Richard was someone who shared our perspectives on a lot of things, and we recognized something very special in him. Because of the nature of this industry it was tough to always stay in touch because we all

perpetually seemed to be on the road or involved in our own projects. But after STP had broken up back in 2004, when he was working songs for on a new Filter album, Richard called us up to come down to his home and hang out in his studio. He wanted to do some writing with us and see what developed. Both Rob and I thought it sounded interesting, so we went on down. We knew within 24 hours that this was going to be something special. We



ANYONE



were so excited that over the next couple of weeks we cranked out a couple of dozen songs and realized that we all had found something we had been looking for. That was the birth of Army of Anyone.

HP: Why did it take more than two years for your album to finally come out?

DD: Oh, there's a long, messy story involved with that— we had a major falling out with our original record label which slowed everything down for about a year. It was just one of those things... we looked up one day and everyone who had been behind the band at the company wasn't there any more. It was scary— the president of the label, our publicist, everyone... they were gone. Then we got

caught up in a legal fight because just as the new people at the label were saying that they weren't really that supportive of our band, they also said that they owned our tapes. This album could have very easily ended up sitting on a shelf collecting dust. We ended up in court for six months. During that whole time we all said that we never want to go through anything like that again, so our management at the Firm decided to launch their own label— and Army of Anyone became the first band signed to that arrangement. It's worked out very well for all of us.

HP: How did you handle the "down time" after STP broke apart in 2002 and the time you got this band together?

DD: I don't know if there really was any down time. Rob and I did a lot of writing with amazing people like (the Black Crowes) Chris Robison— who we actually thought about starting a band with. We also did a lot of production work for everyone from Alien Ant Farm to Glenn Campbell. So it wasn't like we weren't busy— but we did miss having our own thing, our own band. All the writing and production work is a great outlet for your creativity, but it's not the same as having your own group to play with and tour with. That's why when the chance to form Army of Anyone came along, we couldn't pass it up.

HP: To your way of thinking, what makes Army of Anyone special?

DD: It would be too easy to just say "the music", but that would be closest to the truth. This is the kind of project where everyone who likes rock music is invited to take part and enjoy. Whether you were fans of STP, Filter, or people who may have caught on to us through this album, all are welcome to hop aboard. I think many of the fans kind of know what to expect from us because they have lived with us through our previous projects. This isn't some radical change, just the next big step forward in our career. It is something very new and very exciting. We've all been very touched by the degree of support that the fans have already given us for this band. It's something that means a great deal to us, and it's served as a major inspiration for the music we've created.

HP: On the road you've been playing a number of STP and Filter songs right along-side your new material. How has that gone?

DD: Those songs are a big part of our lives. We love playing them— and playing them as Army of Anyone is really special. It's very interesting to hear how they evolve when the four of us perform them. The essence of those songs is still there— but there's definitely a different vibe to them now. And when you mix in some of those songs with the material on our new album, you end up with a very interesting live set— and the response from the fans has been everything we could have hoped for... and more!

HEAVEN AND HELL

MOB MENTALITY

Call them what you will...there's no question that when they stand as a united musical force, vocalist Ronnie James Dio, guitarist Tony Iommi, bassist Geezer Butler and drummer Vinny Appice reign at the apex of the heavy metal world. With the success of their new *Black Sabbath: The Dio Years* compilation disc, and the sold-out status of their current Heaven And Hell world tour, this slightly schizophrenic unit has shown that despite their lengthy gaps between appearances (the last time this quartet toured together was 1994!) they still possess pure metal magic in every note they play. Most of you reading this by now know the genesis of Heaven And Hell—how Iommi and Dio agreed to reunite to record three new tracks for their recently released Sabbath album retrospective and how that quickly expanded into a full-scale tour...albeit under a different name, thanks to the contractual control of Sharon and Ozzy Osbourne. But we also figured there was still much that you didn't know about this rather unexpected and highly exciting reformation, and who better to fill us all in on the H&H nitty-gritty than the legendary Mr. Butler.

HIT PARADER: What was it like the first time you guys stood together on stage in 15 years?

Geezer Butler: It was in Vancouver, and I must admit that I may have been more nervous at that moment than I had been in maybe 30 years... maybe ever! I mean, here we were in front of a sold-out audience about to play 16 songs... most of which we hadn't performed in many years, and some of which we had *never* played live before. That's quite a contrast to performing the likes of *War Pigs* and *Iron Man*, which I had done on stage at virtually every show I had ever played. There was nothing "comfortable" to fall back on, and it was quite a challenge to both my playing and my nerves.

HP: How long did those nerves last?

GB: Oh... you know (laughs). Usually as soon as you start to play they go away, but I did find that I had to pay particular attention to what I was doing. There hasn't been any "automatic pilot" on this tour. Once I relaxed a little bit, which was about halfway through the first song, I started to listen to which one of us might be the first to make a mistake.

HP: Okay... who was it?

GB: I'm proud to say that it was me! (Laughs)

HP: You mention that some of these songs you had never played on stage before. How much of a challenge did those present?

GB: That was mostly the material from *Dehumanizer*. We only did a very brief tour after that album came out, and we never had the chance to bring many of those songs into the live set. So this has been an opportunity to bring those songs back to life... as well as for me to re-learn them.

HP: How did you refresh your memory on songs you may not have played—or even thought about—in at least 15 years?

GB: Some of the songs from *Heaven And Hell* and *Mob Rules* were things that we had played on occasion over the years, but most we hadn't. To be honest, I had to go back and listen to the albums in order to relearn those songs. I was listening to *Dehumanizer* up until the day we started touring—partly to make sure about certain things, and partly because I really enjoyed it.

HP: Have you been pleasantly surprised by the quality of the music you made on those past albums?

GB: Yes, I have. When you're in the midst of the creative process—writing, recording then touring—sometimes you don't get the chance to fully appreciate certain aspects of what you're doing. Going back and listening to this material has really opened my ears. This is really good music. I've been particularly impressed with *Dehumanizer*, which I think was an album that didn't

"They're all wearing their Sabbath T-shirts. We're certainly not fooling anyone."

BY TOM LONG

get as much attention as it may have deserved when it first came out.

HP: What is the single song that has been the most fun for you to play on this tour?

GB: I would have to say *Sign of the Southern Cross*. I always liked that song, but it seems to have grown over the years. Now it's become something truly special and a vital part of the set. I must say I was surprised how satisfying it's been performing that one.

HP: How have the three new songs you recorded for *Black Sabbath: The Dio Years* sounded live?

GB: They're excellent songs. Tony and Ronnie had them pretty much all done—especially the first two—before I was really even involved in the project. But I think they stand up well to anything we've done before. And the crowd's response to them has been simply amazing.

HP: Was there ever a concern on your part that fans weren't going to make the association between Heaven And Hell and Black Sabbath?

GB: It was a *major* concern for me. When the tour was first announced I kept thinking, "Who is going to know who Heaven And Hell is?" But what I didn't take into consideration was the power of the internet, which managed to get the word out there. As soon as we hit the stage every night, the fans are chanting "Black Sabbath." And they're all wearing their Sabbath T-shirts. We're certainly not fooling anyone.

HP: That must be making everyone—except for Sharon Osbourne—very happy.

GB: (Laughing) You said that... I didn't!

HP: Speaking of Sharon, she's stated that Sabbath—which means you, Tony, Ozzy and Bill Ward—will be recording this year. What are the chances of that actually happening?

GB: This year? I don't think there's any chance of that happening. We're all busy, and so is Ozzy, so I think that statement about Sabbath is just something she said when she first heard about Heaven And Hell. I'd love to think that at some point in the future we can do something again as Sabbath, but that's not going to be any time this year.

HP: How has Heaven And Hell impacted your relationship with Ozzy and Sharon?

GB: It really hasn't affected it at all. I was over at their house for dinner a couple of nights before our tour started and everything was totally normal. We had a wonderful time. But we don't discuss business. It's just old friends hanging out. I'll always wish Ozzy the very best, and I think he wishes the same for me.

HP: We must ask... what do you think of Ozzy's new album?

GB: I love it. It's back to being what I expect from Ozzy. To be honest, the last one he did was a little too syrupy for my taste. This one has him back doing what he does best.

HP: Over the years there were so many stories about Ronnie and Tony not getting along. Has that changed this time around?

GB: I think there will always be a stubborn streak within each of us that causes a bit of friction. But unlike past times when we internalized such matters, this time we try and talk them out. So far it's working. But I also felt it was working the last time we all tried working together... and six months later it fell apart. Maybe it would be best if you check back with me in six months!



HP
HEAVEN AND HELL

"It's hard to compare the band we are today with the band we were ten years ago."

BY TOM LONG

Some things have changed in the world of Kittie's Morgan and Mercedes Lander. Back in the late '90s, they were just fresh-faced teens out of the "wilds" of Canada who loved heavy metal and possessed a determination to overcome every obstacle placed in their path. That attitude yielded the chart-topping disc *Spit* along with a well-deserved rep for delivering the metallic goods with a gritty style that told everyone within earshot that this was more than some all-girl "gimmick."

A decade later, these siblings are still as determined as ever, and they both still love their music loud 'n' nasty. But guitarist/vocalist Morgan and drummer Mercedes have also come to realize that some of the youthful idealism that characterized their initial years in Kittie have been replaced by something far more important and far more valuable... a healthy dose of experience and perspective. After going through years of losing band members and record labels with equal aplomb, the Lander sisters and their latest batch of Kittie-cats (guitarist Tara McLeod and bassist Trish Doan) have returned to the scene with *Funeral for Yesterday*, a disc that proves some things may have changed for Kittie... but some other things have remained very much the same.

"We're always going to be a heavy band," Morgan said. "But at the same time, that doesn't mean we can't keep expanding our

approach a bit. That's exactly what we've done on *Funeral for Yesterday*. We thought it would be cool to make an album where you could bang your head and sing along at the same time. So in addition to all the heavy influences we've always had, I started to incorporate some of the ideas I picked up listening to classic artists like Thin Lizzy and Van Halen, where great song structures were always vital."

For someone with such a mature outlook on her music—as well as someone with a decade's worth of road experience, including tour stints with the likes of Motorhead and Ozzy Osbourne—it's hard to believe that Morgan is still only 25 years old. But despite her still-tender-years, this is one rocker who has learned her lessons well, and with *Funeral for Yesterday* it is abundantly clear that she is now starting to put them all to good use. Throughout this powerful collection, Kittie's more expansive, yet still vitriolic hard rock style shines with a clear-cut passion and purpose, with songs like *Breathe*, *Flower of Flesh and Blood* and *Never Again* putting the full gamut of Kittie's rock and roll sounds on total and proper display.

"It's hard to compare the band we are today with the band we were ten years ago," Morgan said. "We've grown up in a lot of ways, and while we still enjoy playing heavy

guitars and screaming as loud as we can, we've learned that there are also times to take a little step back in order to give the music more dynamics. There's a juxtaposition of sounds and styles going on here that makes everything hit you just a little bit harder."

So ten years into their unique rock and roll quest, Kittie still find each day filled with unexpected challenges, unprecedented accomplishments and even a few unwanted diversions placed along their rock and roll highway. But somehow the Lander sisters have managed to survive all that the music world has handed them, and as shown throughout their new disc, they've emerged stronger and smarter in the process. But after living through such a unique rock and roll experience—having a hit album at 16 and feeling your career may be over at 20—we wondered what advice the Morgan of 2007 would give to her teen-aged self... if, of course, such a time-twisting meeting could ever be arranged.

"I don't know if I'd tell her anything... I'd just punch her in the nose," she said. "There are times I look back on those days and I just shake my head in amazement. I mean we were all kids, and very bratty kids at that. Thankfully, we've grown older and wiser, and hopefully the music we're making now reflects that."



"We thought it would be cool to make an album where you could bang your head and sing along at the same time."

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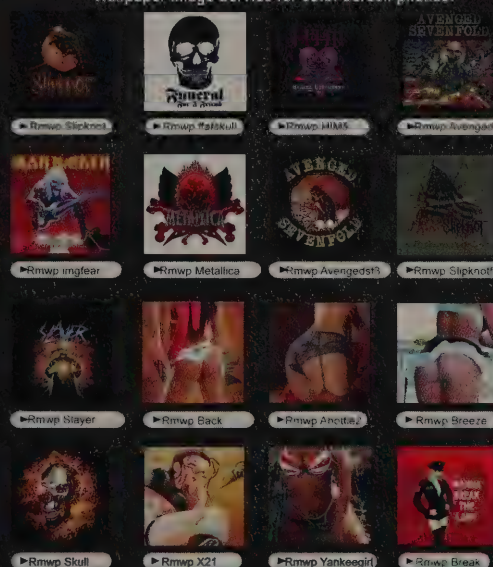
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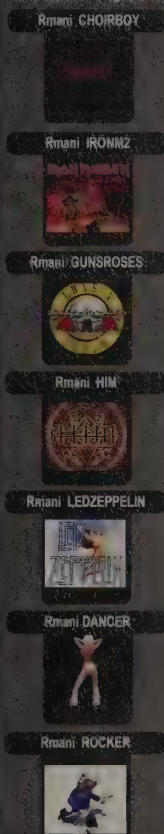


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HP
HATEBREED

hatebreed

SUPREMACY

Before Lamb Of God, Killswitch Engage, and Shadows Fall, there was Hatebreed. Hatebreed have now been paying their dues and smashing away at their instruments as a crucial part of the metal underground for over a decade. They were the first of the truly extreme, up 'n coming bands to sign to a major label, and they were the first of the new bands to hit sales high water marks, thanks to their near-constant touring schedule. Through the years, Hatebreed, featuring vocalist/fearless leader and *Headbanger's Ball* host Jamey Jasta, guitarists Sean Martin and new axeman Frank "3 Gun" Novinec, drummer Matt Byrne, and bassist Chris Beattie, have continued to make music that's tougher-than-a-street-fighter-on-steroids. But Hatebreed's music isn't all aggression; rather, Jasta pens lyrics about believing in yourself and never giving up or giving in to the persons, places, and things that try to drag you down. In a sense, Hatebreed are the musical equivalent of a self-help book. On **Supremacy**, the Connecticut quintet's first album for new label Roadrunner Records, Hatebreed keeps things efficient and as brutal as a brass knuckle sandwich to the kisser. Jasta sat down with **HIT PARADER** to discuss the new album and the evolution of the 'Breed. While most bands pay lip service to remembering their roots, Hatebreed shun words in favor of action, by shedding light on up 'n coming bands and by taking classic bands on tour. Read on.

"The music we make still steamrolls over you."

BY AMY SCIARRETTO

HIT PARADER: *How does Supremacy differ from your other albums?*

Jamey Jasta: Our identity is still there. The music still steamrolls over you, and it's the heaviest music we can possibly make.

HP: *Supremacy* feels like it's a real triumph for you guys. What does it mean to you?

JJ: At certain times, and this is in the liner notes of the record, I felt like I wanted to make a record that involved the listener and the fan. I wanted it to be like how I felt when I bought *Master Of Puppets* and *Reign In Blood*. I remember reading lyrics from those records. This record is a different experience overall, because the lyrics aren't based in fantasy, but in real life situations. That element ties us to the hardcore scene and always will. Having gone through a dark period over the past few years, I knew I needed to start the record with two strong messages, and those messages are the songs *Defeatist* and *Horrors Of Self*. Those songs are like me talking to the people I don't want to be like and me talking to myself, and telling myself the reasons I don't want to be like these people or certain people I've seen throughout my life. I have the capacity in me, to be negative, at times in my life, and that's what I don't want to be again. *Horrors Of Self* is like me looking in the mirror, and talking to others.

HP: *How does it feel to have your music be so successful?*

JJ: That's true. You have to get away from toxic energy, because people can bring you down. You can get with the wrong crowd and it can run you. Not everyone is like Keith Richards. You can't go out and get a blood transfusion whenever you're not feeling good after partying too hard. A lot of people think that partying can help you forget your problems, and it certainly can, but you pay a price, too, in terms of how it affects your body and your mind. I think it's better to deal with your problems in other ways, more productive ways.

HP: *Supremacy* is a very heavy record. How do you feel about the success of this album?

JJ: People have to understand this: this is the music business. It's a business for so many people. But for us, we don't have to go by anyone else's rules. We're not that type of band. Our fans go get our records regardless. Every band who does interviews to promote their brand new record always says, "This new record is the best we've ever done" and they say that

because they have to create hype to sell records because that's the bottom line. We don't do that. Our approach is that our fans come to the institution that is Hatebreed, knowing what they want and knowing they are going to get it. At this point, we're the oldest game in town and we've done it all. We've toured the world, with Ozzy Osbourne, Black Sabbath, and Slayer. Why alienate our fans and deviate from the formula that works and has worked for so long? If people say every song sounds the same, well, my response is that most bands that I love have a signature sound and that's what I love about them. I don't want Slayer to come out sounding like Killswitch Engage or vice versa. I love Slayer and want them to sound like Slayer. I love Killswitch Engage and want them to sound like Killswitch Engage. At the end of the day, our fans want what we give them, and that's why we keep doing what we do. We will never alienate our core fans for fly-by-night fans.

HP: *One of things we appreciate is that you guys are very open to other bands. How do you feel about the success of this album?*

JJ: Times change, and kids need avenues to be exposed to extreme bands. Some people in small towns in America don't have the luxury of a cool indie record store or cool local radio station that exposes new and classic metal bands. Honestly, we love most of the bands we tour with and a lot of times, they are bands that we used to open for when we were starting out, so we're returning the favor.

HP: *Are you happy with the success of this album?*

JJ: Yes. What we're doing is never going to be on Top 40 radio and that's fine with us. That's the music that we make. I would love to tour with Metallica one day, but I would also be happy if they took out any modern bands, like us, Shadows Fall, Lamb Of God, or Killswitch Engage, because kids learn about bands like us through bands like Metallica. It's a gateway.

HP: *What's the most difficult thing you've ever done in your career?*

JJ: I like to cook. When I am home, I love to cook for my kid. I also love to write lyrics, that is a creating process. I am trying to read more books, too.



TYPE O NEGATIVE DOOM MERCHANTS

"This is a very eclectic, somewhat bi-polar album, which I imagine is exactly what fans would expect from us."

BY PATRICK JAMES

Peter Steele was definitely feeling under the weather. Type O Negative's hulking bassist/vocalist admitted that he had been sick for the last week—and that he was "coughing up crocodiles" every time he tried to move his 6 foot-6 inch frame. Obviously, Steele's delicate condition turned our scheduled face-to-face conversation regarding *Dead Again*, Type O's first album in nearly four years, into an on-the-phone diatribe. Still, despite his physical woes, Steele was in typically dark spirits—sprinkling his pithy observations with caustic asides and sarcastic, often self-deprecating humor. In all, it served as a better-than-expected way of gaining some understanding into the ever-complex and often compelling universe that surrounds this Brooklyn-based goth-metal machine. Indeed, on *Dead Again*, Steele, along with bandmates Josh Silver (keyboards), Kenny Hickey (guitar) and Johnny Kelly (drums), has created a disc that provides everything any long-time Type O fan could want... and less!

Hit Parader: Four years... what took so long to finish this album?

Peter Steele: You mean aside from the time in the mental institution and the stint in prison? I guess it was just getting everything lined up the way we wanted it to be. We're on a new record label with **Dead Again**, which is a big deal for us. We had been with Roadrunner for 19 years. It goes back even longer than that since my previous band, Carnivore, was on that label, and they kept control over the individual members once that band broke up. So Type O kind of inherited Roadrunner, and we kind of inherited them. And for the most part it was a good relationship. We got them their first gold album with **Bloody Kisses**, so we played a role in their success. But it was just time to move on. Sometimes you need a fresh start to revitalize what you're doing, and this was that time.

HP: How different was it working with a new label?

PS: It was great. I mean we probably would have re-signed with Roadrunner a couple of years ago, and I like to think that we all left as friends up there, but SPV came along with a much better offer. So we knew they really wanted to work with us, which is all any band can ask for. If a label supports you and your efforts, then it's totally up to you to deliver. But since we recorded just the way we always do back home in Brooklyn, the label didn't really impact what we were doing at all. They come more into play with the videos and things like that, and so far they've delivered everything they promised.

HP: How would you place **Dead Again** into the context of past Type O albums?

PS: I think it borrows something from each of the albums we've done, but it's very unique in its own right. It's a very eclectic, somewhat bi-polar album, which I imagine is exactly what fans would expect from us. We have songs that are barely two minutes long, and others that run a

full 14 minutes. Not too many other bands do something like that. In many ways this is a classic album for us... our latest attempt to turn pain into profit.

HP: Speaking of "profit"... wasn't this album originally going to be called **Profit\$ of Doom**?

PS: That was the original thought. But it got down to a question of tie-ins. It was kind of a good, catchy title... but where do you take it from there. With **Dead Again**, a whole world of opportunities opened up—it is a very Type O title in its morbid way. And I was able to place one of my all-time favorite historical characters, Gregory Rasputin, on the cover. He was such an unusual figure—an Orthodox Christian who was also part mystic, part magician. He could even cure people who were suffering with hemophilia, which since it's a blood disorder kind of ties in with the whole Type O Negative thing.

HP: This album seems to have a somewhat more raw sound than some of your past efforts such as **October Rust** and **World Coming Down**.

PS: If that's true it's because we've used live drums throughout the recording process. On the albums you've mentioned—in fact on *all* our albums since **Bloody Kisses**—we've used synthetic drums in the studio. This time I knew I wanted to use live drums just to invigorate the music a bit. I don't know if it's really made our sound any rawer, but maybe it has.

HP: You've tasted commercial success over the years, and you've known times of struggle. In that context how important is **Dead Again** to Type O?

PS: It's probably the most important

album we've ever done, if you want to look at it that way. It's our first for a new label, our first in four years, and it comes at a very strange time in rock history. The music climate out there right now is just horrible. I'm convinced that if the Beatles released **Sgt. Pepper's**—to me the most brilliant album ever recorded—right now, it probably wouldn't even chart. It's crazy! Who can figure out what's going to sell and what isn't? I know the record labels don't really know because they're suffering as much as anyone.

HP: With so many albums to choose from, how many new songs do you figure you'll include in your next live set?

PS: That remains to be seen. I hate throwing new songs into the set before the fans have had the chance to absorb them. I'll never forget going to see Black Sabbath at Madison Square Garden back in 1979. All I wanted to hear were the songs I knew and loved, and they played a bunch of new stuff that I had never heard before. I left there very disappointed. I said to myself that if I ever got in that kind of position I'd never do anything to disappoint our fans. So we'll stick to the stuff I know they'd want to hear—at least until they tell me otherwise.

HP: What do you mean by "tell me otherwise"?

PS: We're going to use the internet to be in touch with our fans—mostly through MySpace—and ask them what they want to hear us play. That will determine what our set list will be from show to show. I think that will be kind of a cool way of doing things. I tried to make Type O less of a dictatorship over the last few years and more of a democracy, so why not let the fans enjoy a little of that freedom?



It's been quite a year for the Loeffler clan. First came the split between hard rockin' brothers Joe, Sam and Pete, which saw bass-playing Joe rather unceremoniously quit Chevelle, the band the Loefflers have continually led to the top of the sales charts over the last decade. Then came a series of nasty claims and counter-claims between the warring family factions—ranging in subject matter from the amount of back royalties owed, to which brother should take primary blame for the split. Then in March came the release of Chevelle's new album, *Vena Sera*, one on which vocalist/guitarist Pete and drummer Sam have been joined by their brother-in-law, Dean Bernadini, on bass. (Hey, nuthin' like keeping things in the family!) Now that the critical and commercial response to the clan's new disc has started to roll in, it seems as if things are slowly beginning to fall back into place for the Loefflers. But as this highly informative talk with Pete reveals, at times it seems like things will *never* be the quite the same inside of Chevelle.

"It's family, so it's something we've got to deal with on an almost daily basis."

Hit Parader: Are you getting tired of discussing the falling out with Joe?

Pete Loeffler: On one side, yeah, I'd much rather discuss almost anything else. But on the other, so many of the songs on this album touch upon that subject that it's impossible to talk about *Vena Sera* and not have the subject come up. We split with Joe well over a year ago at this point, but it's still very much in the forefront of what we deal with every day. That's just the way it is when you're talking about your brother. It's not exactly like he's gone off somewhere and we're never going to see him again—though I haven't seen him in a long time. It's family, so it's something we've got to deal with on an almost daily basis.

HP: Didn't you have to give him a large sum of money recently?

PL: Yeah. That had to do with back royalties on the album, though he never wrote a lyric or contributed to writing any of the songs. We could have made a mess of it and gone to court and aired it all out, but we didn't see the benefit of that. Again, we're talking about family here; we didn't want to upset our parents any more than necessary, so we just agreed to give him some money and hope that this would all blow over. To be honest, we weren't happy about it, but there wasn't much we could do.

HP: Let's clear up one thing; you didn't fire him... he quit, right?

PL: He definitely quit... and it wasn't the first time that he had tried to do that. It had been going on like that for years. He never seemed happy with the lifestyle that a band like ours has to accept. We're on the road so much, and that didn't seem to make him happy. He had tried to quit a lot of times in the past and Sam and I talked him out of it. But this time we just gave in—for everyone's sake. And it wasn't like it was done in a pleasant way... it was very confrontational. It's put a real strain on our entire family, and that's something that each of us has to deal with in his own way. I'd like to think that someday soon all of this will go away and we can be friends and brothers again, but this isn't that time.

HP: Let's move on to something happier... the success of *Vena Sera*.

PL: After what we've gone through, this album is maybe the only thing that can put a smile back on my face. It was an amazing release for me to be able to go into the studio

and just play music. Obviously, a number of these songs touch upon the situation we've had within the band, and that was all very helpful. When you can write about things that are troubling you, it tends to release some of the negative energy.

HP: Songs like *Antisaint*, *Well Enough Alone* and *Humankind* seem like they have a "classic" Chevelle blend of heaviness and hummability.

PL: I guess you could put it that way. This is such a heavy album, and I think a lot of that had to do with the mood we were in when we were writing and recording. We felt very aggressive, and these songs reflect that. But I like to think that we haven't lost our sense of humor. There are some very amusing things in these songs. We did the recording sessions of *Vena Sera* in Las Vegas, so we were surrounded by a lot of things that struck us as rather ridiculous. So some of that definitely made it into the songs.

HP: For a long time, people saw Chevelle as the leaders of hard rock's Next Wave. Now you still think that's true?

PL: (Laughing) I really don't know what "wave" we're in right now. I can't say I've been really following everything that's been going on in rock over the last year or so, but I don't get the feeling that music is in a very good place at the moment. I think that rock has lost a lot of its focus and direction. I don't want to take on the responsibility of providing that direction, but at the same time, if we can produce something that people want to hear, and that they respond to, then that's definitely something I'd be proud of.

HP: It seems like your younger hard-rock band have "aged" a lot since you last marked in recent years. Why has it been so different for Chevelle?

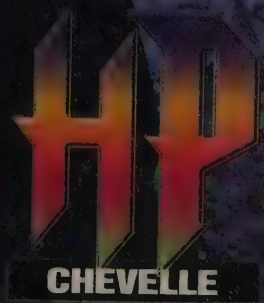
PL: It's hard for me to say because I'm so close to what we're doing. I don't get the chance to take a step back and look at it the way a lot of other people can. I'd like to think it's because we've worked hard and that people really like the music that we've made. Maybe it's just that simple. Maybe it's more complicated than that. But if it is, I don't want to know about it.

HP: Considering all you've gone through over the past few years, has your definition of the Chevelle rock and roll ideal changed very much?

PL: I hope not. We still cover a lot of ground with our songs. That's true both in a musical and a lyrical sense. I tend to be a quiet guy most of the time—I suppress a lot of the discouragement I feel and it tends to come out when I write and play. Those emotions tend to build up inside me until they explode, and when they do, that's when I know that we've got a new song.

FAMILY BUSINESS CHEVELLE

BY CHIP WAGNER



Just saying the name "Ozzy Osbourne" is enough to fill the collective craniums of four generations of metal fans around the globe with vivid images of the Metal Godfather. From biting the heads off of select bats and birds, to pissing on varied national monuments, to starring in a top-rated TV "reality" show, to creating some of the greatest hard rock music of all time (both on his own and with Black Sabbath), over the last 38 years, Ozzy has created the blueprint for the quintessential heavy metal madman. But beneath his larger than life, tattoo-covered visage lurks the heart of one of the true survivors of the rock and roll realm. His victorious battles with drugs and drink are the stuff of legend. And his conquering of his own inner demons continue to make him one of the most controversial and charismatic performers in the world. Now with the release of *Black Rain*, his first solo disc since 2001's *Down to Earth*, Osbourne has returned to the metal world in fine form. No, his voice may not be as strong as it once was (though, let's be honest, that was *never* his main claim to fame), but the fact is that despite now being 58 years old, Ozzy can still rock out with the best of 'em. As he prepares to support his latest release with a headlining run at this year's *Ozzfest*, we thought it was the perfect time to get a state-of-metal address from the one and only Ozzy Osbourne.

Hit Parader: Does it surprise you that six years (how passed!) have you released your last solo album?

Ozzy Osbourne: It is a little hard to believe that so much time has passed. But it's not like I've been sitting on my ass all that time doing nothing. I toured behind that album for a long time, and then the Sabbath stuff came along, and that kept me very busy. Then we had the TV show in the middle of it all, and there's always been *Ozzfest*. So it's been a busy time, but it's nice to finally have this album done. This is the first album in my life that I've recorded while being completely clean and sober. I'm very proud of that—especially when I consider how satisfied I am with the results.

HP: It traditionally takes you a long time in the studio to complete a solo disc. Why?

OO: It's hard work! (laughs) If you don't include the first few albums with Sabbath—which we usually did in a day or two—I've never been the fastest worker in the studio, and thankfully at this point in my life I don't have to be. But I do work at it as hard as I can. I know some fans think that I'm just relaxing around the pool, but what they don't know is that I'm actually out back, in my new studio, working on music. It did take a long time to finish this album, over a year of on-and-off work, but the key thing is that this music is exactly what I wanted to be.

HP: Did working your new home (OO: how so) that work out for this album?

OO: It was wonderful! The only "negotiation" was the Sharon could drop by

unannounced at any time to see if we were all focused on what we were supposed to be doing. That really kept us on our toes! But it really worked out better than I could have imagined. Any time I had a bit of inspiration, I could just run out to the studio and work on it. I did a lot of the recording of this album with Kevin Churko, who used to work with (legendary producer) Mutt Lange, and he was so important in getting the songs together and making them sound right. We have a full-size mixing board out there, and it's outfitted with the latest ProTools gear. So my studio is totally state-of-the-art. Kevin knows exactly how to work with all that stuff, I don't have a clue about it.

HP: The album has already gotten an incredible response. How satisfying has that been for you?

OO: You know, despite all the good things that have happened to me over the years thanks to rock and roll, I'm still a very insecure person a lot of the time. When I finish an album I go back and forth from thinking it's the best thing I've ever done to thinking it's a total piece of rubbish. Having fans respond to it the way they have means more to me than they'll ever know. It's the reason that I'm still doing this, at this stage of my life.

HP: Let's talk about some of the songs on the album. Is there one particular track that stands out for you?

OO: Maybe it would be *Lay Your World On Me*. Some people think it's about my relationship with Sharon, and her battle with cancer a few years ago, but that's not totally true. While it may have been originally inspired by Sharon, I think it's a message that many people can relate to. Then I imagine the song that has drawn the most attention is *Countdown's Begun*, which takes a look at the war in Iraq. I've never been very political in my music, and I don't see a reason to start now. But just as the events of 9/11 impacted me greatly, watching what's gone on during this war—and seeing first-hand how it has affected the lives of so many soldiers and their families—is something that I felt I wanted to address in my own way.

HP: The title, *Black Rain*, seems to have a rather ominous tone. Was that the intent?

OO: That seems to be a theme running through a lot of the songs—from *Black Rain* to *Silver to the Almighty Dollar* to *Countdown's Begun*—which take a look at the world around us. It's not a very pretty picture, is it? I'm not trying to preach to anyone... just make them aware of what I see happening. Actually, *Black Rain* was inspired by footage I've seen of the original nuclear tests back in the 1940s. They'd blow up a bomb, and a few hours later it would rain and it would be black with fallout and everything else. People who didn't know better back then would just stand out

in the open and let it fall down on them.

HP: Your recording and touring hand now runs on 77% Vodka or

**"THIS IS THE FIRST
ALBUM IN MY LIFE THAT
I'VE RECORDED WHILE
BEING COMPLETELY CLEAN
AND SOBER."**



DEATHMACHINE

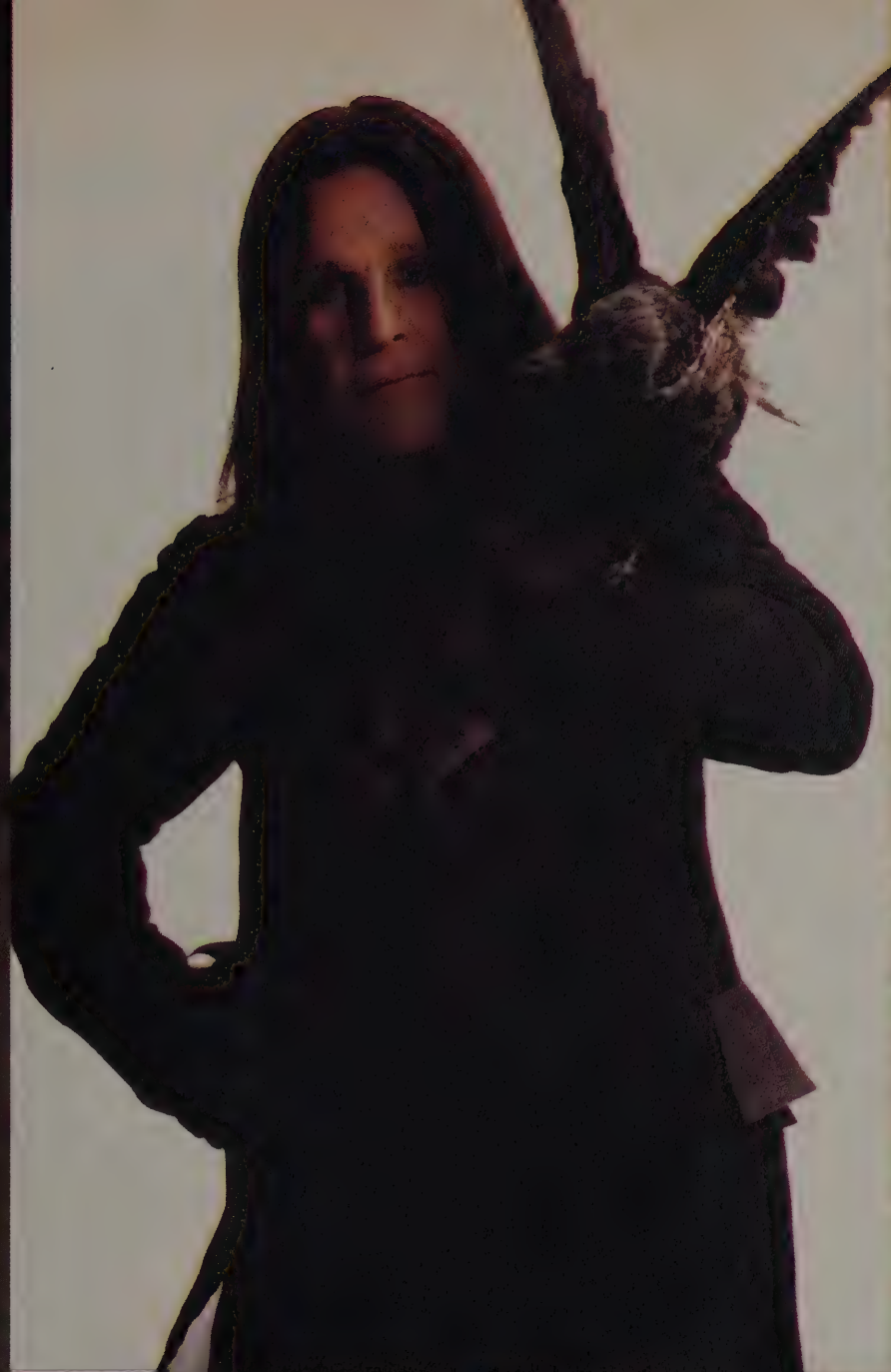
THE GODFATHER RETURNS

BY ANDY SECHER



OZZY





guitar, Mike Bordin on drums and Blasko on bass. How does this unit compare to some of your previous solo units?

OO: I don't particularly like to compare bands I've had as a solo performer because they've all been wonderful in their own way. But this one is excellent. I mean working with Zakk is always a pleasure—he's there for me whenever I need him. He truly is my right arm. And I think that he's done some of his best playing on this album. Zakk and I just have to be careful in the studio because we can just sit around telling old war stories and never get enough work done. And we *know* that Sharon will walk in right in the middle of that.

HP: How much of the new album do you figure you'll put in your live set once you hit the road?

OO: That's hard to say at this point. I mean there is so much material to cover... so many albums. What I might do this time is shy away a bit from the Black Sabbath material. Sharon has suggested that I don't play any of the Sabbath songs this time—but I don't know if that will work. The fans still want to hear *War Pigs*. I may just wait until that band tours again to play those songs, but I'm not sure at the moment. I have more than enough material from my solo albums to make a great set. I imagine we'll bring in a number of the new songs, but it's too early to know exactly how many.

HP: You bring up the name of Black Sabbath. Earlier in the year a statement came out from your camp indicating that you wanted to record and tour with Sabbath during 2007. Is that possible?

OO: I imagine *anything* is possible. But with this album coming out in early summer, then with me scheduled to tour for months after that, I don't see much time for that to happen. I hope Sabbath will come back together at some point, and I look forward to that happening, but I just can't see it happening this year.

HP: How did you feel about Tony Iommi and Geezer Butler reteaming with Ronnie James Dio as Heaven and Hell?

OO: Even when Sharon and I first heard about that—and it did catch us a bit by surprise—we wished everyone involved the best of luck. It's not really fair to expect Tony and Geezer to sit around waiting for me. They knew that I was heavily involved in getting this solo album completed, and that Sabbath wasn't going to be my priority for a while. So they did what they felt they needed to do. Good for them!

HP: But you and Sharon made a big deal out of making sure that everyone knew that Heaven and Hell had *nothing* to do with Black Sabbath.

OO: Well, I would like to have people think that Sabbath is Tony, Geezer, Bill (Ward) and myself. We've worked hard over the last few years to reestablish that idea. I know that fans enjoy the music they made with Ronnie and that's fine. But it really doesn't have anything directly to do with Black Sabbath as it stands today. I think calling it Heaven and Hell was a very clever idea on their part.

HP: When would you imagine that you might consider doing something with Sabbath... and might that include *finally* recording a new album?

OO: For some reason I feel more pressure doing an album with Sabbath than on my own. There would be so many expectations surrounding that... especially since we haven't really done a full album together in something like 27 years. I would like to think that we'll eventually do that album, and that it will live up to the Sabbath legacy, but of course, that remains to be seen.

HP: Let's change subjects... what made you and Sharon decide to make *Ozzfest* a free festival this year?

OO: It was all Sharon's idea, and I think it's brilliant. Ticket prices have gone through the roof for most rock and roll concerts. We think it's time that we gave something back to the fans, and this is the best way we could think of doing it. Not only will they get to experience a great day of music, but a lot of young bands will be exposed to the audience they need in order to grow. So it's a situation that works for everyone involved.

HP: You only played 10 shows at last summer's *Ozzfest*. Do you plan on performing at all of them

this year?

OO: That is the plan... At least it's Sharon's plan! (laughs) She keeps adding new dates in Europe and America and she just says, "You'll play them!" I guess I will! Actually, I'm looking forward to it. I'm feeling really good these days, so I'm up for it. We've got a very exciting bill, with bands like Lamb of God and Lordi, so I'm excited about getting back on the main stage this year after headlining the second stage last year.

HP: One last question... how do you view the current state of the heavy metal form?

OO: You know, each year at *Ozzfest* I have the chance to see and hear a lot of new bands. Some of them I may have heard before, and a lot of them that I haven't. I must say that I'm almost always impressed by the degree of originality and inspiration that they bring to their music. It makes me feel proud to know that I may have served as an influence on so many great, young musicians.



TATTOO YOU

EXPLORING THE HARD ROCK/
TATTOO CONNECTION





THE TATTOO HARD ROCK CONNECTION

BY: AMY SCIARRETTO

Tattoos and hard rock music go hand in hand. In many cases, tattooing is really — and jolly, they and Sharon, coffee and cream, Pamela Anderson and Tommy Lee, or maybe we should make that Pamela Anderson and Kid Rock — or, on second thought, maybe we should totally forget about that one! Back to the subject at hand: years ago, tattoos were something sported by people on society's living fringe, representing a visible symbol of what was then viewed as an extremely alternative lifestyle. Today, a high percentage of people you'll encounter in various youth subcultures, as well as mainstream culture, will sport some sort of tattoo somewhere on their body. Even the straight-faced guy working at the bank, or the conservative girl heading to the office may well be secretly harboring a tattoo under their fit-me-in attire.

"As alternative and rebellious subcultures are gaining popularity and acceptance, along comes the acceptance of tattoo," says Mike Ski, singer of The AKAs, as well as tattooist to Kith's Mercedes Lander, Stretch Arm Strong's Chris McLane, My Ruin's Taimie B, and Bleeding Through's Brandon Schiappatti, to name but a few. "Art is similar to music for musicians because it's an unspoken thing that they can visualize. The role of tattoos helps visualize the way that they feel. It's like art and music come together in a well done tattoo to create an overall feeling or message, and sometimes, musicians need to take a step where they have to communicate their vision to someone else, who brings it to life."

Ski himself is covered in tattoos, and apprenticed at Lotus Tattoos in New York, under former hardcore singer CIV, who was once in legendary hardcore band The Gorilla Biscuits, as well as the band CIV.

While a wide variety of today's leading music purveyors — from

"Every time we come to Texas, Pat gets a tattoo. It's a place that's a block away from the hotel. Usually we just have a friend come out and he's just back stage hookin' everybody up. Yeah, there's nothin' better than free tattoos."

DALE, SEETHER

mainstream rappers to radio-friendly pop practitioners — may often sport gaudy tattoos in their quest to seem "cool", tattoos are obviously more prevalent — and more extreme — on metal bands like Slayer, Avenged Sevenfold and the late, great Pantera. Same goes for fans of the aforementioned bands: You're more likely to see a Slayer fan adorned in several, highly visible tats, whereas a pop music fan might have a well-concealed, say, butterfly tattoo. Why is this? "The nature of heavy music in general is pretty aggressive," offers Ski. "And the aesthetic of tattoos, and the types of tattoos that rockers and their fans get, are more aggressive, stronger looks, as opposed to flowers on their ankles or yin-yang symbols on their backs. The style of the tattoos accompanies the nature of the music."

Ski's signature style is a modern take on what might best be termed American traditional tattoos. In more conventional terms, that's taking traditional things like "sailor style" tattoos — things like skulls, anchors, hearts, roses, cherries, daggers — and managing to make them look acceptable and tough at the same time. It's a difficult task, but one that Ski has excelled at during his lengthy career as a tattoo artist. In his experience, Ski, who has also designed merchandise artwork for bands such as Hatebreed, Andrew WK, The All American Rejects, Slipknot and ~~Seether~~, ~~anytime~~, ~~as~~ ~~one~~ ~~might~~ expect, rockers — and their followers — are most attracted to "tough tattoos" as well "bad luck symbols."

He also says that when it comes to band-oriented tats, most of his clients, be they a musician or a regular fan, tend to lean towards song titles, anthemic or lyrical phrases, as opposed to out and out band logos. "A song title or lyric is an awesome tattoo. Bands will write songs that

"I don't get recognized. Sully's more identifiable because he's been on MTV a lot more and he's got a friggin' tattoo on his face. I don't go on MTV, I don't have tattoos, really, and I don't dress up. It's like jeans and t-shirts for me and I'm just a regular guy."

TONY ROMBOLA, GODSMACK



BRANDAN SCHIAPATTI

PHOTO: FRANK WHITE



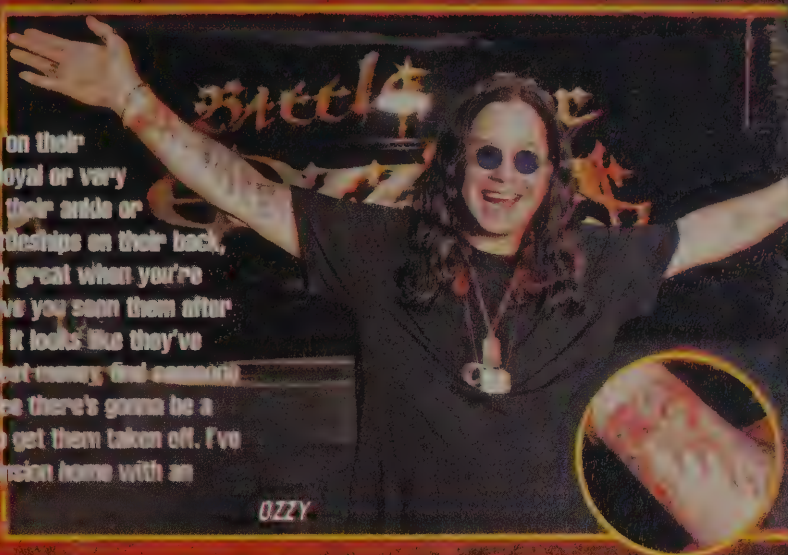
KERRY KING

4 NIT PARADER

"Sometimes I see people running around with 'Ozzy' tattooed on their fingers. If they're not called Ozzy, I think they're either very loyal or very stupid. Now you see chicks with a nice little hummingbird on their ankle or maybe a daisy chain. But some of these chicks have huge battleships on their back, or the Titanic on their chest, and I'm going, 'You're gonna look great when you're about 70!' A tattoo ain't going nowhere. A laser? Fine, but have you seen them after they been lasered? It looks like they been taken off with fire. It looks like they've been cremated! It's worse than the tattoo. If you want to invest money, find someone who's working on the new tattoo-erasing machine. I guarantee there's gonna be a lot of people within the next ten or fifteen years who want to get them taken off. I've got an alien on my arm. I'm gonna look great in an old-age pension home with an alien coming out of my arm."

OZZY

PHOTO: ANNAMARIA DISANTO



OZZY



people connect with and it becomes a way to say, 'this song is an extension of who I am as a person.'

It's that type of connection between musicians and their fans that has fostered the current hard rock-tattoo connection and is undoubtedly the key element that will continue fuel the fire behind this fast-growing artistic trend.

"People can look at me and see my tats," said a leading rocker. "They get an immediate impression about me—whether it's right or wrong."

CHESTER BENNINGTON'S TATTOOS:

- 1) Upper Left Arm - (Plecos) An original done by Jody from Club Tattoo in Tempe,
- 2) Upper Back - (Six arms spread out) Done by his friend, Derrick, in Arizona
- 3) Lower Back - (Linkin Park lettering in old English) Done by Jeff Timan from Tattoo Deluxe in California
- 4) Upper Right Arm - (Japanese Kai Fish) Done by another friend, Wookink,
- 5) Lower Left Calf - (Hybrid Theory Soldier) Done by Dee from Jacksonville, Florida
- 6&7) Left and Right Arms - (Flames) Done by Jeff Timan from Tattoo Deluxe in California.
- 8) Right Calf - (dragon)
- 9) Right Finger on Left Hand - (engagement band) Done by Derrick and designed by his wife, Samantha.
- 10) Pinkie Finger on Right Hand - (birthstone in gold ring)



They're young, they're fast, they're loud, they're successful. Who else could we be talking about but So Cal's favorite tattoo-covered punk-metal contingent, Avenged Sevenfold, who on their latest album *City of Evil*, prove that they're ready to take their place among the hard rock form's true elite. After half-a-decade of making their name primarily by performing all-age shows throughout the L.A. environs, vocalist M. Shadows, guitarist Zacky Vengeance, guitarist Synyster Gates, drummer the Reverend and bassist Johnny Christ have taken a major step forward with their latest work. They've created an album that not only fulfills the promise they've shown over the years, but that delivers the kind of up-beat, go-for-the-throat brand of rock and roll excitement that is so sorely lacking on today's music marketplace. And in addition to all that, this hard rocking unit is one of the most tattoo-savvy bands in the hard rock world. That's something we discovered during our recent conversation with the tat-covered Vengeance.

6 HIT PARADER

HP: Your new album has garnered so much praise over the last year. What do you think makes it so special?

Zacky Vengeance: We started out when we were so young that there was naturally a lot of room for growth. But while we've evolved as a band, a lot of our thoughts for this album have gone back to where it all began for us. We wanted to draw on the energy that first got us interested in music—everything from the pure metal energy of Pantera and Iron Maiden to the more punk attitude of Bad Religion. I think we've brought it all home on *City of Evil*.

HP: A7X came out of the metalcore/hardcore/Orange County scene, but you guys often seem to want to distance yourselves from it from that beginning. Why?

ZV: Even though people think we're abandoning the metalcore scene or taking ourselves out of this movement, the reality is that no metalcore kids came to our shows. There were more Hot Topic fans that came to our shows than anything else. The metalcore scene never shot us. But you can't say we're leaving that scene? We were never connected by it.

HP: One of the things that has really made A7X stand out from the crowd are your tattoos. What inspires them?

ZV: Different things... different places... and different people. The key thing for me is to have people I know and trust work with me on my tattoos. You wouldn't believe the number of fans who come up to me and say that they're a tattoo artist and offer to do work on me for free. I see their work—a lot of them are really good. But I just feel better dealing with the guys I know from home. The problem is that they're so busy, and we've been on the road so much. I try to fly them out to where we are if I have something particular in mind.

HP: The skull bat is a prevalent symbol of A7X. Like Ed Hunter of Iron Maiden!

ZV: We call it the Death Bat, and that's what kids call it, too.

HP: I've been out in my A7X hoodie, which only has the bat, and not the band name, and people come up to me and say, "Avenged Sevenfold rules!" The symbol really is recognizable!

ZV: That's so cool! A friend of ours drew it, and it caught on, so we put it on all our merch. It was selling way more than anything else without it.

HP: Speaking about the "death bat", tell us about some of your favorite tattoos.

ZV: The one everyone notices first is our (death bat) logo which is on my chest. That one's hard to miss. Jim Miller did that one, and I love it. The fans see it when we're on stage, and they go crazy! It turned out even better than I had hoped.

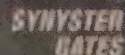
HP: Over the years, has your taste in tattoos changed?

HP: You have some strange tats... and there are also strange themes in *City of Evil*. Tell us about them.

HP: You have always used The Bible as lyrical inspiration, despite being a non-religious band.

HP: How are you guys dealing with the fan reaction to the success of your record?

HP: A lot of people are saying that A7X are like Guns N' Roses for the newer metal breed of metal fans.





Since he first burst upon the hard rock scene more than 20 years ago, Motley Crue's Nikki Sixx has often been more renowned for his ribald off stage exploits than for his musical skills—a fact that still rankles the tattoo-covered, raven-haired bassist no end. Sure, the fact that Sixx once almost died from his drug abuse, and that he has been married to no less than TWO Playboy Playmates—at different times, of course—has raised his mainstream Q factor to levels surpassed perhaps only by the likes of notorious once-and-future Motley bandmate Tommy Lee. Those in-the-know, however, are well aware that through good times and bad, Sixx has always been the motor responsible for keeping the Motley music machine running in high gear. Not only do his pounding bass riffs serve as the foundation of the band's legendary sound, but his songwriting skills has been at the crux of the Crue phenomenon throughout their decadent career. Never was that fact been more in evidence than during the band's recent "reunion" run where Sixx and drummer Lee reteamed with vocalist Vince Neil and guitarist Mick Mars to bring the "original" Crue lineup to the fore once again. And, as expected, at the center of it all was the thoughtfully loquacious Mr. Sixx. By now you've all read countless stories about Nikki's battles with sex, drugs and fast cars, so we figured we'd give him the unadulterated opportunity to discuss his new clothing line—which, not so coincidentally, was directly inspired by his myriad tattoos.

Hil Parader: What do your tattoos represent to you?

Nikki Sixx: My tats are as much a part of me as my hands or feet. In some ways they represent who I am as much as the songs I've written and the music I've played. They chronicle my life—all the good and the bad.

HP: Why did you decide to crate a clothing line influenced by your tattoos?

NS: Doing that was something that has always interested me. For a long time I didn't have the time or the know-how to get it together, but then I met Edward Dada, who runs a clothing company called Dragonfly, and as soon as I mentioned the idea to him, he got it. He's always been about doing things that are a little different, and he saw that what I was suggesting would work very well with his clothing concept.

HP: How do you translate your tattoos into clothing ideas?

NS: We take the basic palette of what I have in my tattoos and put them on the clothing. It's not a direct representation of my tattoos and how they are on my body. We're using the designs on the clothing in a very inventive and creative way. I have so many tattoos on my body that I don't think I'll ever run out of ideas.

HP: How have you found designing clothes different from creating music?

NS: I always used to joke that Motley Crue was popular because all of our songs were three minutes long—which was the attention span of our fans. Well, to be honest, that's also my attention span too. Sometimes, writing songs and making an album can become a long, drawn-out affair. So far, I've found this project to be just the opposite. I can come up with a new idea, and a few weeks later it's out there. That's very cool. And what's interesting is that a lot of the people I've met in the clothing business remind me of people I've met along the way in rock and roll. There's a lot of creativity going on there.



NIKKI SIXX



BY: AMY SCIARRETTO

Burly tattooist Paul Booth was in the middle of permanently etching ink onto a customer's epidermis. We didn't need to see it, because we already had a pretty good idea of what it would look like, since Booth's style is as distinct as a fingerprint: dark, brooding, haunting, and unsettling, to say the least. But we were glad that the extremely busy man – his waiting list is approximately two years long and he works by appointment only – was taking a break from his work to talk to us about as his role not only as master tattooist, but as tattooist to some of the biggest names in heavy metal.

"My hand was getting tired, so it's good to take a break," laughs Booth in his notoriously popular Last Rites studio in New York City. The studio has an atmosphere that imbibes all the senses: incense, a smoke machine and, of course, blasting hard rock music. Booth has been tattooing for 18 of his 39 years on this planet, and has provided custom, freehand tattoos for Down's Philip Anselmo, Slayer's Tom Araya and Kerry King, Slipknot's Clown, Corey Taylor, and Mick Thompson, Deftones' Stephen Carpenter, as well as members of Mudvayne, Cradle Of Filth, Chimaira, Sepultura, and Sevendust. Clearly, he works with the heaviest and the hardest. Booth went on the road with Sepultura, Biohazard and Pantera in the early '90s, moving from dressing room to dressing room to ink

"I haven't spent much money on tattoos. I'm like free advertisement for most tattoo artists."

PHILIP ANSELMO, DOWN

the various musicians who requested his services. He also hit the road with *Ozzfest* for four years, tattooing more band members than he can recall. He was also one of the organizers of the *Tattoo The Earth Festival* in 2000, a touring circus which featured many of the aforementioned bands along with traveling tattoo artists.

"I enjoy working on rock stars because we share a common plane," Booth explains. "I have fans of my work. They have fans of their work and we relate on a lot of levels. I've been fortunate because the people in hard rock bands approach me the way my regular customers do. I do custom freehand and dark stuff, and it goes hand in hand with the music they are making. They come to me and say, 'Do your thing.' We'll brainstorm together,

"We're really into touring and tattooing – it's another form of artistic expression. There's the music, and then there's art beyond the music."

6, SLIPKNOT

and I'll draw what they say. They give me artistic freedom."

Not only are Booth's styles dark and unnerving, but so is his ethic. He doesn't use stencils, which is a standard tattoo procedure. Instead, he sketches directly on his human canvas with a pen, to get rough ideas. "I just go for it and like to create right on the skin," he says. "Initially, we don't know what it's going to turn out like, I demand and require immense amounts of trust from my clientele. If they're not going to give me that, they're in the wrong chair."

"My first figure was a SLAYER eagle. And the dragons and the tribals are all I have got. I wish that I only would have done the SLAYER eagle and not the dragons 'coz I like tribals that stand out from a distance. Like you could be snowblind in the concert hall and you are still gonna see it. That's what I like about it."

ARMY OF ME, SLAYER

Booth is adamant that he connects with musicians on a vision before he provides their tattoos. Such an approach, he believes, is the key that allows him to do his thing so freely. "When you tattoo people over the years, you start to rely on the hunch or the vibe you get from them," he explains. "It's almost like you're a psychologist and a better judge of what people are looking for. It isn't about just doing what I want, but giving them what they are looking for. If anyone declines on doing a tattoo, it's me, usually. If I think someone isn't ready, because my stuff is a bit extreme, I tell them, 'Hey, you're not ready for this undertaking.' You have an obligation as an artist to make sure they make a right decision because a tattoo lasts a lifetime."

Regarding the hard rock-tattoo connection, Booth explains his theory. "I think kids get into tattoos for the

"My tattoo is a star, a symbol. My religion is Wicca - earth, air, fire, and water. Wicca is an old, ancient religion that was around way before Christianity. It's just basically the practice of the earth. They believe in the universe, karma, natural healing products like herbs, plants and roots and stuff like that. It's what witches did. It's just something I stumbled on reading books from an ex-girlfriend of mine and it kind of fit the picture in my life. I followed it, took some courses. It's just something I've always believed it."

SULLY ERNA, GODSMACK

same reason they get into music. It's rebellious, especially hard rock. Tattoos are like the visual aspects of rebellion and getting out the aggression. You make music, or you listen to this type of music, to vent. Tattoos are another form of venting. It's a form of expression. Both tattoos and music are outsider art. Musicians are artists, like me, but they are working in a different medium."

EVAN SEINFELD



PHILIP ANSELMO



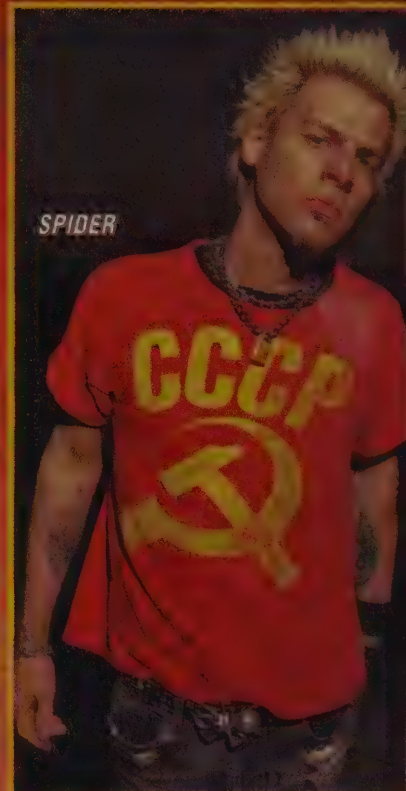


At one time tattoos were the ultimate display of livin' by your own rules—a societal outcast's most visible form of self-expression. These days, however, it seems that just about everyone, everywhere has a "tat" of their own. From little flowers on ankles to back-covering works of art, tattoos have become a 21st Century phenomenon. But let's face it. When it comes to body art, *nobody* has ever done it like rock and roll stars. Whether it's been Ozzy's self-scrawled initials or the head-to-toe pictographs that adorn some of today's most renowned rockers, tattoos have become more than a statement of purpose, they've become true cultural landmarks. With that in mind, we proudly present our ultimate guide to rock and roll tattoos, featuring the stars who have 'em, the people who make 'em, and the reason they got 'em. We like to call it, with all due respect to the Rolling Stones, *Tattoo You!*

"My tattoos have a very special meaning to me. It's spiritual in many ways because they're a reflection of my beliefs and personality. The process of designing them and then having them applied is very time-intensive, but the net result is incredibly rewarding."

LAJON WITHERSPOON, SEVENDUST

"I remember when we first met Fred Durst, he was a tattoo artist. Jonathan (Davis) agreed to have him do some work for him. I wasn't really into them very much at the time, but I decided to let Fred do some work on me as well."



SPIDER

He was amazing... really creative. But I remember that I ended up getting sick from the experience. It wasn't Fred's fault, but something didn't sit right with me."

HEAD, KORN

"When I had the dragon tattoo put on my shoulder, it hurt worse than anything I had ever experienced. I still don't know why I did it—though it does look really good! If I wasn't drunk when I had it done, I'm sure I never would have been able to handle the pain. I'm not very good with pain."

OZZY OSBOURNE

"To me, being a tattoo artist is just as expressive as being a musician. You get to work with someone on something that's very personal... something that will be with them for the rest of their lives. There aren't too many things you can say that about, including wives, jobs or friends. But a tat is there forever, so you'd better love it."

FRED DURST, LIMP BIZKIT

"My tattoos are a very important part of me. They allow me to carry important parts of my life with me at all times. They may be on the outside, but they're an extension of what I'm feeling on the inside."
SONNY, P.O.D.

"I get a lot of questions from fans about my tattoos. They want to know what various ones signify, when I got them, where I got them and why I got them. I do my best to explain it, but a lot of it is something that's hard for me to easily describe. It's more than art to me... it's an extension of my soul."
SULLY ERNA, GODSMACK

"I've got a tattoo that says 'wicked' running up my arm. But I don't know if I really am wicked. There are parts of me that definitely are. But it really gets people talking. I'd like a dollar for every time someone has asked me about that tattoo."
SCOOTER WARD, COLD

"I am an artist in all aspects of my life. Expression means everything to me. So I think it's just natural that my tattoos would reflect that philosophy. I've had a lot of work done, especially on my arms, and I plan on having more done in the future."
MARILYN MANSON

"My favorite tattoo is probably the multi-colored flame pattern I have running up my arms from the wrist. I guess I have a certain image to a lot of people—and it's not necessarily of being a tattoo kind of guy. That's why I like showing 'em off. It show a very different side of my personality."
CHESTER BENNINGTON, LINKIN PARK

"Just before I had the tattoo work done on my skull, I was warned by a friend that it might hurt a great deal. But for some reason, concern never crossed my mind. It was something I was determined to do; something I *wanted* to do. The fact of the matter is that it really wasn't too painful."
ROB HALFORD, JUDAS PRIEST

"There was a time in L.A. when every guy in every band had to have a tattoo. The shops on the Strip were open like 24-7

PHOTO: AMANDA GILBERT



SONNY

just to take care of the business. They'd have guys wander in there at midnight to have some idea they had come up with put on their arm. It was wild."
SLASH, VELVET REVOLVER

"Where we come from, tattoos are a cultural thing. It's part religious, part your family, and in a lot of cases there's a gang affiliation involved. So when you show your tattoos off, you're kind of showing off your street 'certificate of authenticity.'"
WUV, P.O.D.

"You want to know the 'secret' meaning behind my tattoos? It's none of your business!"
CHINO MORENO, DEFTONES

"You can't really see any of our tattoos because they're always covered by our stage stuff. Maybe we'll all just have our masks tattooed on our faces."
CLOWN, SLIPKNOT

"Some people take their tats so seriously. I think most people got 'em when they were a little drunk or on a dare, so how seriously can you take that? I love my tats because each one represents a time in my life, a person in my life, or an event in my life—except for the ones I was too drunk to remember getting."
TRACII GUNS, BRIDES OF DESTRUCTION

VELVET REVOLVER



PHOTO: ANIVAMARIA DISANTO





OZZY

them I'm like, 'oh, I want one.' Then a couple months later you're kind of like, 'this is stupid.'" **CHINO MORENO, DEFTONES**

"I've always had various artistic sides to my personality. Some are represented through my music, others through my art. In a very vital way, tattoos are a direct extension of that." **ROB ZOMBIE**

"I've got three tattoos, this is the first one I got [a sun on his wrist]. I don't like it, but our bass player has it, and I got it. Actually, the sun is probably my biggest enemy, so I'll probably get it laser removed or cut off my arm. This one [a Virgin Mary on his forearm] is the only one I like, I'm really into Catholic art. And I have a tattoo on my back with my name on it. I don't really like that either. I don't think about tattoos, it's just if someone is giving

and I were going to do that. So hopefully, we'll get that done." **MATT, MUDAVYNE**

"My most recent tattoo, this small cat with a derby and a cigarette on my stomach, that's my most messed up one. It looks like a jail-house tattoo. I got it at four o'clock in the morning, drunk one night on Sunset Boulevard, and I drew it really quick in front of the guy and said do it exactly like this. And he did. My old lady got one too. Her's is per-

JONATHAN DAVIS



"I don't have any tattoos. Tom and Travis have the tattoos. And Travis actually spends a lot of time thinking about his tattoos. He has certain tattoo artists that he'll only go to because he trusts their work and they know what he wants and he knows what they are capable of doing. Each tattoo that Travis has means something particular to him and is well thought out and well placed and Travis kind of has a master plan for his tattoos. And Tom just one day wakes up and says, 'I want a tattoo' and tries to think of something that might be cool on his body and then he goes and gets that done wherever."

MARK HOPPUS, BLINK 182

"Sometimes when we're on tour if I find a rad artist I'll go and say, 'I want this tattoo. I want to find someone who will do this piece.' If the tat's a picture of something, then I bring it in. Like I have a ghetto blaster [tattoo] on my stomach and it's actually a tattoo of my first ghetto blaster. I actually brought it in [to the tattoo parlor] and said 'You know, make it look like this.' And I'll tell Tom that I'm going and he'll think of something on the way down to the tattoo shop and he'll get it."

TRAVIS BARKER, BLINK 182



SEVENDUST

"I got my Cold Chamber tattoo way before the band got a deal. Meegs did his way before we got a deal. Then I got one [a Roadrunner tattoo] of our record company who's been behind us. They managed to stick a lot of money and effort behind us. You know, when I got my first tattoo at 16 and my mom said, 'What are you doing to your body?' And I said, 'Mom, I am going to be in a rock band.'"

DEZ FAFARA, DEVILDRIVER

"There's no story behind any of my tattoos, except for the two on my neck - the names of both my daughters. The rest... I got all the Korn album titles on me, which probably means something too. Everything you see on my arms, besides maybe in the license plates are my daughter's initials. But most of this is just a bunch of stuff. It doesn't mean anything... I just like the art."

FIELDY, KORN

"Sid the drummer from Slipknot and I want the same tattoo. Have you ever seen the Shaolin monks, the old Shaolin Kung-Fu movies? They have like six dots, black dots on their head. Sid

fect, it's so clear. It's on the back of her neck. I drew that as well." **SLASH, VELVET REVOLVER**

"The worst job I ever had was painting temporary tattoos down at Salisbury beach as a summer job, and you'd always get this 300 pound woman coming in and wanting a rose on her thigh and stuff. I don't think it got any worse than that. One time I worked in a furniture factory and they sent me into this room to bail some foam. They had this ancient machine, completely manual, in this huge warehouse where I was supposed to put a piece of cardboard in the machine with foam then another piece of cardboard, wrap it with wire, and crank it squashed as much as I could. They told me the last guy broke his knees 'cause he let go of the crank and it came back, that was another pretty crappy job I guess. But that tattoo job was the worst. You'd get guys in there SO drunk. They had so much alcohol pouring through their system you couldn't even apply the tattoo because they were sweating the alcohol." **SPIDER ONE, POWERMAN 5000**



HP
MANSON





KILLSWITCH

Howard Jones couldn't stop smiling. The burly, chadematic frontman for Killswitch Engage had just been informed of the latest sales figures for his band's recent release, *As Daylight Dies*, and the news was good... very good. In fact, the disc's quick ascension up the sales charts had proven to be even more dramatic than what Jones and his bandmates—guitarists Adam Dutkiewicz and Joel Stroetzel, bassist Mike D'Antonio and drummer Justin Foley—had expected.

"We really didn't know what to expect," Jones said. "We're always confident that we have a core following that will stick with us through thick and thin. But when you go out on a limb, as we have with this album, you sometimes begin to wonder whether you might alienate as many people as you please. This album has a definite point of view, and it's not the kind of perspective that a lot of people are going to enjoy. It's the brutal truth about the state of the world... as we see it. The fact that so many people have responded positively is very rewarding."

Even the fact that their previous album, 2004's *The End of Heartache*, had gone gold did little to prepare this Massachusetts-based metal-core unit for the kind of acclaim that has come their way in 2007. Some media outlets have already dubbed Killswitch Engage "Band Of The Year", with *As Daylight Dies* receiving similar high-flying accolades. At the same time, other sources—including some of the most respected music journals in the land—have quickly labeled KsE as metal's "most important" band. And while they've appreciated all the positive attention that's come their way, the truth is that it's all been a bit much for this confident, yet still relatively unassuming unit to swallow.

"When you make an album the way we do—near our homes and with a quick burst of creative energy—you never know exactly what the results will be," Jones said. "We hear about some bands laboring for

months, if not years, in the studio, and we all kind of shake our heads. It's not that we don't pour a lot of thought and consideration into what we do. But it's more that we let our instincts guide us into what we consider an explosion of musical energy."

The explosive nature of the band's metallic attack—as heard on new songs such as *My Curse*, *For You* and *Desperate Times*—show the Killswitch crew to be in superlative form throughout *As Daylight Dies*. Indeed, this is a disc that through its thinly-veiled political activism and harsh social commentary moves this unit into an even more prominent position in the contemporary music hierarchy. And while they are perhaps the last band on the list when it comes to seeking high-profile acclaim or world-wide recognition, Jones and the boys know that what they've created this time around has started lighting a rock and roll firestorm from Boston to Bangkok.

"It's inevitable in some ways," Jones said. "Sometimes when you present an open appraisal of a controversial situation people are going to take notice. We didn't set out to create a very political album, but that's what we ended up with. We don't want to shove ideas or beliefs down people's throats, but our beliefs are all there in virtually every song on this disc. We worked on this album with the notion that there wasn't much time left to make the kind of statements that needed to be made. It supplied the music with a degree of urgency that is overwhelming."

With the multi-talented Dutkiewicz serving as the producer for *As Daylight Dies*, this time Killswitch Engage has created an album that may very well stand as the unit's magnum opus. At times the shocking "beauty and the beast" contrast provided by the group's musical dynamics are enough to simultaneously enthrall and enrage any listener. Yet at its heart KsE's latest disc remains a highly personal outlet for the group's own ideas and emotions. With Jones' powerful, emotive voice serving to enhance the memorable melodies and rugged chord structures that fill every Killswitch anthem, there is no question that on their third studio disc this talented unit is once again determined to radically shake things up within the heavy metal world.

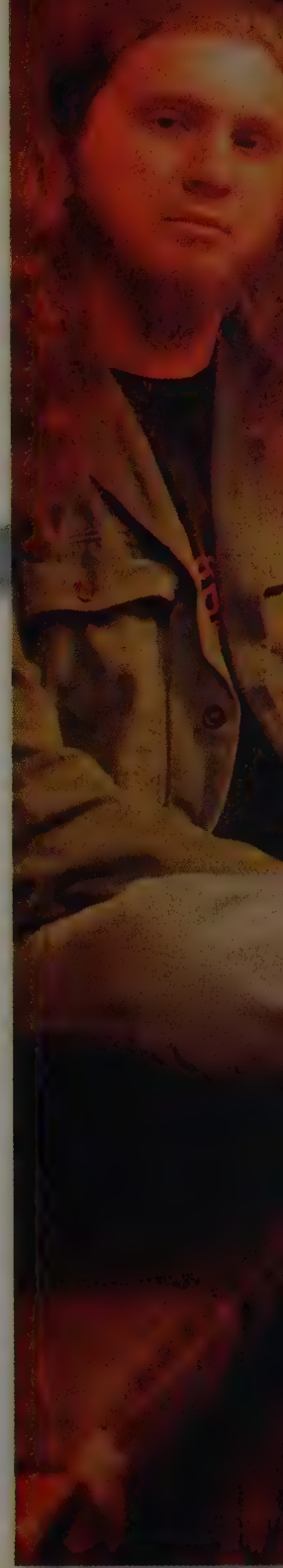
"To a lot of people—including ourselves—we're always going to be primarily a heavy metal band," Jones said. "But I don't think anyone who's heard *As Daylight Dies* can deny that we've moved well beyond the confines of conventional metal. Listen to the melodies... listen to the degree of diversity that we utilize. There may be some things that you can grab hold to from a strictly metal perspective. But if you approach this music with an open mind you'll quickly see that it's not limited by any easily available label."

For many fans, the fast-growing success of Killswitch Engage reflects the continuing evolution of the heavy music form. With *As Daylight Dies* quickly proving to be one of the year's most successful "underground" metal albums, it would seem as if this pace-setting unit has now provided additional ammunition for those who want to proclaim them to be Metal's Most Influential Band. Creating a sound that is simultaneously powerful, lumbering, melodic and insightful, throughout their new disc this unit has presented a style that is equal parts "classic metal" stomp and cutting edge romp. In the process, they've laid down guitar-driven grooves heavy enough to sink a battleship and hooky enough to grab significant radio airplay.

When all was said-and-done, these guys knew they had created a disc that would provide them with the next giant step in their quest to reach the top of the modern metal pecking order.

"On this album we managed to be even heavier at times, while also becoming more melodic," Jones said. "I have to believe the development of our sound has to do with the fact that this band has played together night-after-night for years, and that has a definite impact on the way you approach things. I don't know if we want to assume any titles or become spokesmen for any musical movement. That's really not our style. We're one of those groups that puts our message in the music we make. But at the same time, there is a change happening in music. And I think it's a very healthy change. If we can be part of that, I don't think we'd have any problems with that."

"It's the brutal truth about the state of the world... as we see it."



ENGAGE

DELIVERING DAYLIGHT

BY P.J. MERKLE



Shadows Fall

Maintaining The Thread



Shadows Fall have paid their dues. Now this Massachusetts-based five-piece hopes to reap the benefits of their hard-earned efforts. Following a decade-long apprenticeship on indie labels, during which time they established themselves as perhaps the premier state-side proponent of progressive-tinged metallic mayhem, vocalist Brian Fair, guitarists Matt Bachand and Jonathan Donais, bassist Paul Romanko and drummer David Germain are now ready, willing and more than able to carry their hard rock maelstrom to new career heights. With the release of *Threads of Life*, their major label debut, Shadows Fall have clearly emerged as one of the keystone heavy metal bands of the 21st Century, and that's a responsibility these ex-die rockers take quite seriously.

"There's never a 'throw away' musical moment with us," Fair said. "It doesn't matter if we're rehearsing by ourselves, jamming in the studio or doing a sound-

check before a show, we try to make every note we play or sing count. That's the way we approached this album. We wanted to make sure that every song was the best it could possibly be... and that every part of those songs showed as off to the best of our abilities."

The new disc, which comes in the wake of the band's 2000 break-out effort, *The War Within*, puts on display the full arsenal of Shadows Fall's impressive rock and roll attack. Working with producer Nick Raskulinecz (whose previous credits include everyone from Stone Sour to Rush) the band has created a swirling vortex of metallic intensity, one that continually provides ample room for these superlative musicians to strut their abundant stuff. In sharp contrast to the vast majority of current hard-rock attractions—who, let's face it, too often get by on style rather than substance—throughout *Threads of Life*, the SF boys prove themselves to be one of this generation's most thoughtful and thought-provoking units.



"We have a special opportunity with this album," Fair said. "It's our first on a major label, so we sense that a lot of people are going to have the chance to hear it. We may be new to some of them so we want to make sure that they get the immediate and proper picture of what we are as a band."

As one might expect, creating such album "perfection" didn't come without some cost to Shadows Fall. Indeed, the band was forced to cancel a highly anticipated tour late last fall (where they were scheduled to hit the tour trail with Killswitch Engage) in order to complete work on their new disc. And while Fair admits some lingering disappointment over the cancellation, he realizes that such a sacrifice was necessary in order for the band to achieve exactly what they wanted during their latest studio quest.

"It broke our hearts to cancel that tour," he said. "It was going to be a lot of fun to be out with Killswitch, as well as Bury Your Dead, since we're all from New England and have been friends for years. Originally, we expected to have the album done by the time that tour was scheduled to start last November, but it just wasn't finished, and as important as this album is to us, we realized that it was our priority."

For Shadows Fall the current acclaim being heaped upon **Threads of Life**, comes after a decade of perfecting their intricately detailed metal approach. Formed in 1996 by Donais, Bachand and original vocalist Phil Lebonite, SF's initial intent was to try and capture the cutting-edge energy and inherent majesty presented by many of that era's Scandinavian "dark metal" bands. However, being based 4,000 miles from that music's Swedish base, and operating at a time when such music was little more than a "cult" phenomenon on U.S. shores, the Shadows Fall gang found little initial reaction to their efforts. But by 1997 the group felt strong enough about their creative vision to record a self-financed EP, *Somber Eye to the Sky*, a disc which opened the ears of both fans and concert promoters throughout the northeast.

"It was difficult at first because we were doing something very different," Fair said. "But once the fans caught on, they really rallied behind us—and that's something for which we'll be eternally grateful."

A year after that first EP hit the street, the band decided that in order

to both expand their sound and their audience, a new singer would have to be found, and former Overcast frontman Fair was recruited to fill the role. With their new vocalist aboard, Shadows Fall slowly went to work on their primary task—solidifying their fan base and centralizing their expansive sound. It took them until 2000 (following numerous European tours) to land a record deal and put together material for their debut disc, **Of One Blood**, a landmark achievement which instantly made Shadows Fall heroes of the burgeoning metal underground on both sides of the Atlantic. Still, it would be another four years—including the appearance of the band's highly lauded 2002 effort, **The Art of Balance**—before Shadows Fall truly began to receive the kind of recognition they deserved. That reaction was spawned by both the critical kudos awarded **The War Within**, and the attention drawn by the eye-popping performances given during their numerous concert tours.

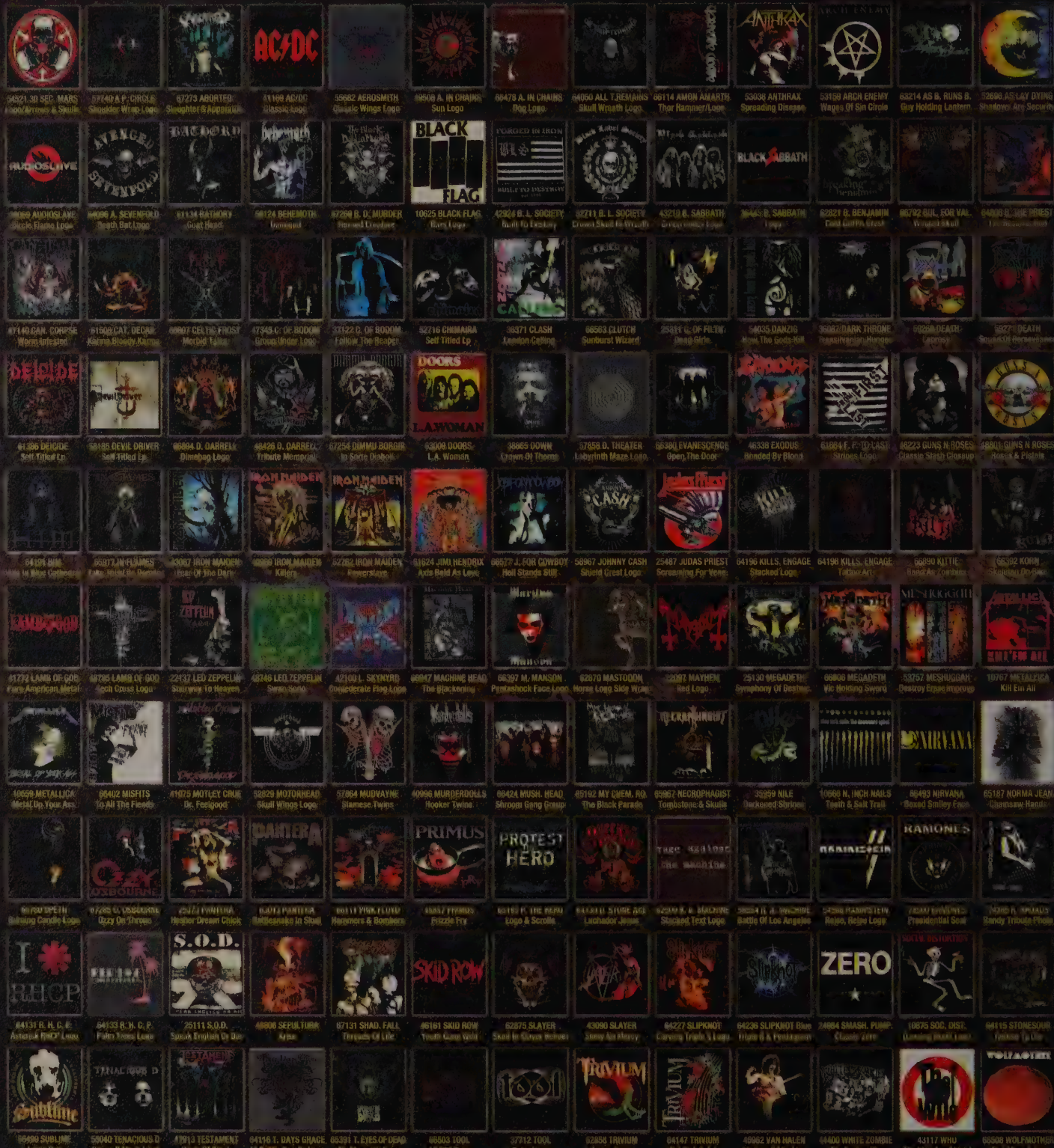
"Going on the road has always been a very liberating experience for us," Fair said. "Because the style of music we play is rather unconventional, virtually every band we tour with helps us expand our audience. One of the best things about not being 'overnight sensations' is that you grow to have a solid understanding of yourself and your band. It's been a long time coming for us. Because of that, any expectations that people may have for us are only surpassed by our own expectations."

As Fair indicated, much has changed for Shadows Fall during their decade-long run towards wide-spread recognition. During that time they're grown from being a highly eclectic, and too-often overlooked local band into a group that not only won national notoriety by co-headlining tours with the likes of Slipknot, but also by garnering a prestigious 2005 Grammy nomination for their track *What Drives The Weak*. Fair admits to finding it a bit strange to suddenly discover his unit as a media-loved "sensation". But he also quickly states that he's quite content with his band's current lot in rock and roll life.

"It's safe to say that everyone in this band is very appreciative of everything good that's come our way," the singer said. "The idea that we were nominated for a Grammy is just wild! It shows that if you believe in yourself and in what you're doing, there are no limits to what you can accomplish."

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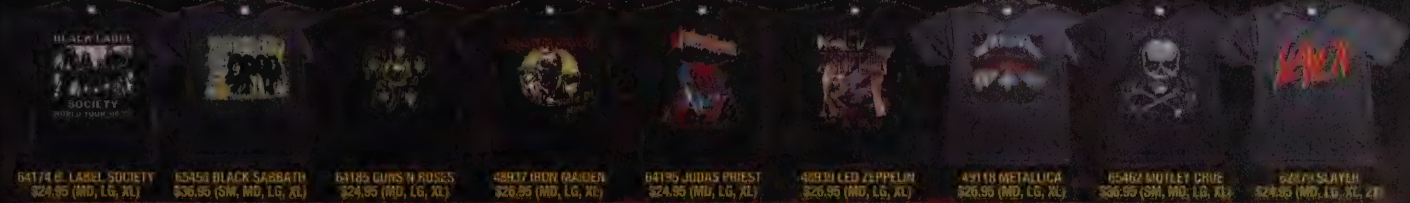


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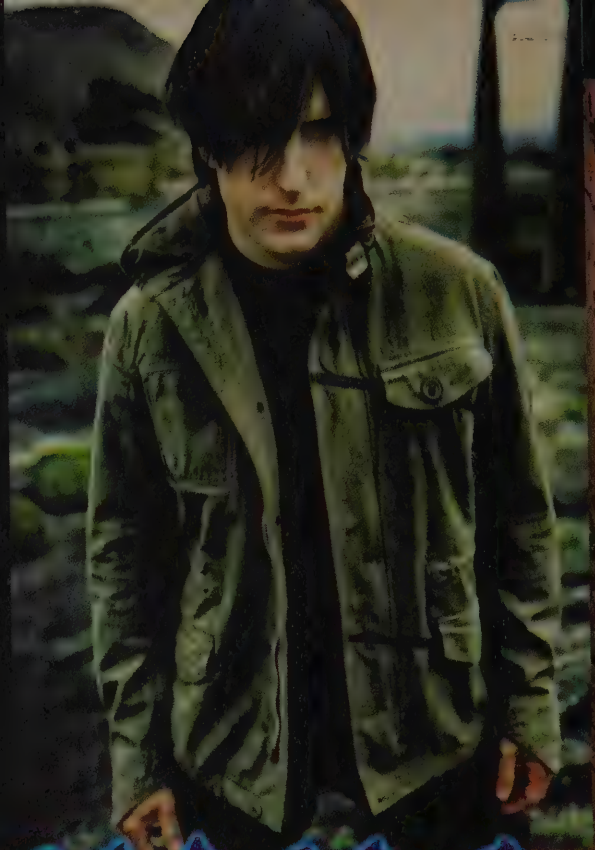
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time mch nails zero hour

BY MICHAEL NARRON

50 HIT PARADER

Trent Reznor has remained intriguingly mum in regard to the "secrets" housed within the music and lyrics of Nine Inch Nails' new disc, **The Year Zero**. Following a dizzying (and to many, surprising) array of media interactions that followed the appearance of his 2005 release, **With Teeth**, the ever-unpredictable Mr. Reznor has decided to lay rather low in regard to his latest album, allowing the fan-generated hysteria surrounding the disc's mysterious "concept" to serve as its own marketing and promotional tool.

"There has been an incredible ground-swell of interest in this album," said a record label source. "It's unlike anything we've ever witnessed before, and it's all because of who Trent is, and what he represents to millions of fans around the world. He's laid down a fascinating web of clues that stretch back for months before the album was even released. And even after it came out, he's continued to let the speculation run wild. Perhaps in this case, the less said about exactly what's going on, the better."

Indeed, the level of intrigue that has accompanied the arrival of **The Year Zero** has been nothing short of astonishing. Media outlets around the globe have battled with one another to reveal the next "clue" in the concept disc's complex scheme, while fans from Tokyo to Topeka have e-mailed and blogged one another in their attempts to decipher the album's myriad hidden messages. Mixing dark, Orwellian, 1984-like lyrical imagery, with conspiracy plots drawn seemingly straight from the pages of the *X-Files*, throughout **The Year Zero** Reznor has once again proven himself to be one of rock's most brilliant personalities... and one of its most controversial characters. With the disc's central story line revolving around an end-of-the-world scenario involving top-secret government cover-ups, mind control and ethnic cleansing, the album has already generated more speculation and intrigue than any rock recording in recent memory. And with Reznor, that's most likely *exactly* what he had in mind all along.

"All that we really know about the album is what Trent has told us," our label source revealed. "And that is that the idea for **The Year Zero** was spawned from a daydream he had which involved the end of the world, and that the setting for the story is actually 2022. It's an amazing—and at times terrifying—album."

Certainly it's not surprising that Reznor has remained generally silent in regard to **The Year Zero**. The fact is that at key times during his dizzying two-decade stint atop the rock world, it's often appeared that for NIN's main man talking about himself and his myriad musical accomplishments ranks somewhere between having elective hernia surgery and root canal. Clearly, Reznor has never particularly warmed to the notion of opening up his creative soul to the eyes and ears of the inquiring world. While its songs may hold the key to Reznor's new album creation, the fact is that many of his thoughts remain cloaked behind a well-constructed maze

of lyrical complexity. With Nine Inch Nails that's simply the way it is... and that way it's always going to be. That's a notion already widely accepted by the countless NIN fans dotting the face of Planet Earth who view any offering made by Reznor as worthy of their respect, time and support.

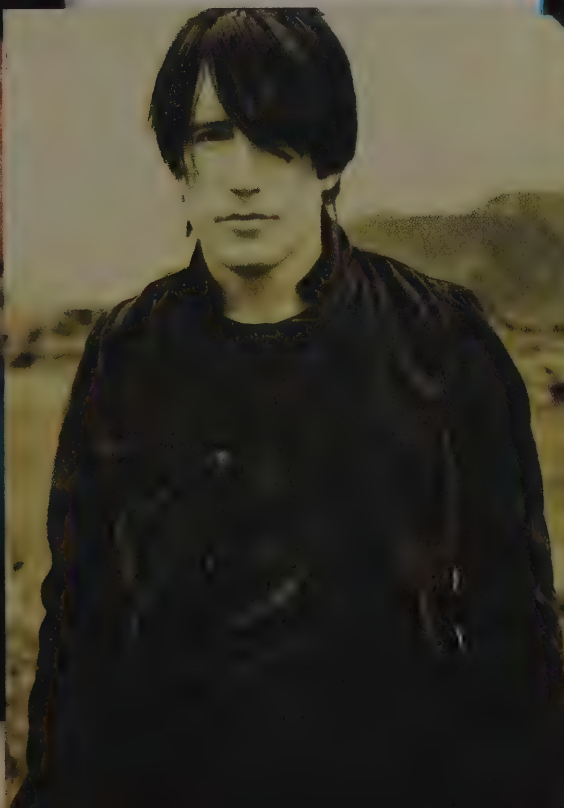
"When you consider the musical geniuses of the last 20 years, Trent Reznor's name must be at the top of that list," said a noted East Coast radio personality. "Just consider the impact he's had on music... from emo; to techno, to hard rock. He's done it all, and maintained his unique air of mystery the entire time."

True to his mercurial nature, Reznor continues to calculate each and every move he makes, forcing those around him to sweat out the potential consequences of his actions...and inactions. Like a western gun-fighter of old, Reznor seems to garner great pleasure out of making those around him squirm as they wait and wonder—coercing those caught in his blinding aura to wither under the strain of his imposing nature. Sometimes it seems like it's all just a game to Reznor—a high stakes battle of human chess with winner-take-all results. But Reznor doesn't play that game by conventional rules; never has, never will. In fact, it often seems as if he creates his own set of rules as he goes along, hoping to create as much of a ripple in his wake as humanly possible.

"I think I'm more aware of what people expect from me—and what I expect from myself—than ever before," he said back in 2005. "Having gone through a very intense personal ordeal over the last few years, I have come to understand a great deal more about my role in things."

Clearly, at times during his historic career Trent Reznor has been one very misunderstood soul. To some on the rock and roll periphery—those that only know Reznor through his thought-provoking albums or his often unsettling MTV videos—he remains a figure of considerable mystery. To those few souls who proudly stand within his inner circle he remains the single most dynamic force operating within the contemporary music sphere. Perhaps it's only fitting that Reznor seems to derive great satisfaction from the radically divergent reactions his larger-than-life aura elicits. After all, here's a multi-faceted artist who appears to thrive in a world filled with tension, controversy and even occasional acrimony. Such emotions serve to supply his music with a healthy dose of its cutting-edge emotion and provide his lyrics with their ability to dissect and then disseminate unique insights into the human condition. But apparently underneath it all lurks the heart of a true star—someone who innately understands the impact his decidedly off-center musical stance will have on those around him...and who revels in that reaction.

"When you become content, you run the risk of becoming complacent," Reznor stated. "I don't know if I ever really want to become too content with the music I make. I want it to keep changing, and keep challenging those who hear it."



MACHINE HEAD

BY PETE MORGAN

HEAVY DUTY

It's difficult for Machine Head main man Robert Flynn to recall how many times over the last decade he's believed his band was on the verge of a major commercial breakthrough in America. But seemingly each and every time—despite producing a string of superlative industrial-meets-punk-meets-heavy metal albums such as **Through the Ashes of Empires**, **Supercharger**, **Burn My Eyes** and **The Burning Red**—that kind of acclaim has never reached this Oakland, CA-based unit. But now with the release of Machine Head's latest disc, **The Blackening**, guitarist/vocalist Flynn believes his band (which features guitarist Phil Demmel, bassist Adam Duce and drummer Dave McClain) may finally start to receive State-side recognition that will match the degree of acclaim they've long enjoyed in Europe. Part of his positive attitude stems from the critical kudos already handed the darkly disturbing contents of **The Blackening**. Another part stems from the highly successful American tour the MH crew has recently completed with the likes of Lamb of God and Trivium. It all adds up to a very interesting time in the life of the ever-intriguing Mr. Flynn.

"We wanted to challenge ourselves and see what developed."

Hit Parader: What makes **The Blackening** a special album for you?

Robert Flynn: This is by far the most ambitious album we've ever done... and with this band that's saying something! When we first started writing, we knew that we wanted to try something a little different... something that kept all the key musical ingredients that this band is known for, but at the same time really pushes us. We wanted to challenge ourselves and see what developed, and I'm happy to say that the results were better than even we could have expected. The music is very complex, and the playing is highly technical, but we managed to add those elements while sacrificing none of our fundamental heaviness and energy.

HP: Many long-time followers of Machine Head feel that this is a "return to form" album in terms of your lyrical approach.

RF: That's true. There is definitely a change in the lyrical approach on this album. If you go back to an album like **Burn My Eyes**, there was a great deal of social commentary on there. It may not have hit you between the eyes, but it was there. On more recent albums I think I've allowed my own life to color the lyrics, and I wanted to get away from that a bit and back into more socially relevant material, which we did on songs like *Clenching the Fists of Dissent* and *A Farewell to Arms*. I think the nature of the world, and everything that faces each of us on a daily basis made that decision a necessity. This is a darker album than anything we've done before because the world is a far bleaker place.

HP: How does **The Blackening** contrast to earlier Machine Head albums in terms of its musical content?

RF: I don't really like comparing albums in that way. They each have to stand as a representation of where we were at that given point in our lives. I'm very proud of everything we've done in this band. But with all that being said, I do believe that this album has pushed things to new heights. It's an awesome album—one that I really enjoy listening to now that I've had the chance to gain a little perspective on it.

HP: How does this album fit into the contemporary heavy metal scene?

RF: I don't know if it does, and to be honest, I try not to spend too much time thinking about those things. There's a lot of great music going on these days, and there are a lot of great bands. But we don't view those bands as our competition. Let them do what they want, as long as we are free to do what we want. What we set out to do this

time was make an incredible album, and I think we have. How others choose to interpret it, or categorize it, is best left up to them.

HP: Speaking of other bands, you've recently been on the road with Lamb of God and Trivium. How did that go?

RF: Touring with bands like Lamb of God and Trivium was an excellent experience for us because I respect those groups so much... and they seem to share that respect for us. And together we were able to put on an incredible show every night. The intensity just didn't let up from start to finish, and I think that we each pushed one another to greater heights on a nightly basis. It was a lot of fun, which is really all you can ask any tour to be.

HP: This is Phil Demmel's second album with the band. Did that familiarity help in the creative process?

RF: I've known Phil for years. We were together in a band, Vio-lence, long before I ever dreamed of putting together Machine Head. I've always loved his playing, and when the opportunity came for us to work together again a few years ago, we both thought it offered some very interesting possibilities. His guitar work fits into this band so well, in fact, his playing really motivated the music on this album.

HP: In the past you've rejected having Machine Head classified as "merely" a heavy metal band. Do you still feel so strongly about that?

RF: I do, because sometimes when you let yourself be described like that, people think you're some kind of "classic metal" band, and that's something we clearly are not. I've never tried to hide the fact that many of our musical influences are heavy metal bands, but many others are not. I mean I still love Metallica's **Master Of Puppets** and Motley Crue's **Shout At The Devil**. But I also love Nine Inch Nail's **The Downward Spiral** as well as a lot of things that bands like U2 and The Cure have done. All those bands and all those styles of music have had an influence on us.

HP: If you had the choice of seeing your new album instantly go platinum, or have it add to a slow career build, which one would you choose?

RF: I want platinum... and I want it now! (Laughs) We've been "building" for long enough! I think this album has a good shot at doing very well in that regard because it will truly touch people. There aren't too many albums around at this time that can make a claim like that. One of the things that I find happening today is that many bands seem content to put out an album with two or three songs that really rock, then the rest don't go anywhere. Our goal this time was to make a great album all the way through.



ROBERT FLYNN

"We're still the guys you don't want to mess with."

These days, things look quite different through the eyes of Velvet Revolver. That's especially true when compared to this super-group's view of the rock and roll world back when they released their debut disc, *Contraband*, in 2003. At that time most everyone within the music industry was focused on the basic fact that ex-members of Guns 'N' Roses and STP were making new music... and that the group's choice for frontman had suffered through a recent series of headline-generating off-stage problems. These days, however, as they complete work on their eagerly-anticipated second disc, *Libertad*, guitarist Slash, bassist Duff McKagan, vocalist Scott Weiland, guitarist Dave Kustner and drummer Matt Sorum can rest quite comfortably in the knowledge that they've overcome their initial hurdles—both on-stage and off—and have quickly made their own vivid mark on the hard rock landscape.

"It is different for us now," Sorum said. "I think we're a little more cohesive and focused, and there aren't as many people questioning what we're doing. It's great that we have a number of years together already

is the chance to strut their stuff once again and show fans both young and old that classic, riff-powered hard rock is still alive and well.

"We're not out to prove anything to anyone—other than ourselves," Slash said. "We've all been doing this for too long to feel like we have the rock and roll 'cause' on our shoulders. All we want to do is make another great album, take it on the road, and enjoy ourselves while we're doing it. I've always said the important thing was having a long, successful career... not being famous. I always admired bands like the Stones who've done it for years and years. That's the goal for me with any band I'm in. And that's the goal of Velvet Revolver. With our second album we've proven this isn't going to be any one-and-done project. We want to make this work for the long haul."

So with all that in mind, where does a band like Velvet Revolver fit into today's hard rock world? It's a question that still fascinates the band members, their followers and the entire rock and roll industry. Will a unit heavy on guitar riffs and loaded with on-stage charisma continue to appeal to a generation more attuned to the face-painted histrionics of Slipknot? In all honesty, it does—

VELVET READY FOR ANYTHING REVOLVER

BY DAVID VOLKER

under our belts, so we know what to expect from one another, and how to get the best results. You'd be surprised how important that is in a rock and roll band like this one."

Still, despite all of their recent success, the last year hasn't been without controversy for the VR gang. Stories of internal strife—much of it stemming from a war-of-internet-words the band (especially Weiland) got into with the notorious Axl Rose—filled the rock wires early in 2006. Then fresh questions concerning the band's direction came into play, temporarily side-tracking this committed crew from their prime musical directive. But apparently as fast as any such difficulties arose, they were quickly dispatched, perhaps reflecting the new-found level of maturity that these one-time rock and roll "bad boys" now seem to enjoy.

"We're still the guys you don't want to mess with," McKagan said with a smile. "But at the same time, I think everything we've gone through in our pasts makes us very aware how important this band is to all of us. We can't allow little things to get out of hand... and we haven't. When we started writing for this album, it was like everything else just melted into the background. They just didn't matter."

As the hoopla surrounding *Libertad* continues to escalate, it appears as if some within the Velvet Revolver entourage (including folks at the group's record label) have gone out of their way to once again compare the band's new music to the wall-shaking sounds created by their past stellar associations. Slash, for one, takes all such talk as a compliment, believing it shows just how excited everyone is about VR's latest crop of guitar-driven masterworks. Whether such comparisons serve to further titillate a rock-starved generation yearning for a return of heavy music's perceived Golden Age, or merely to educate a younger crew weaned on the likes of Disturbed and Staind, seems to matter little to these veteran musicians. All they really want

isn't seem as if the guys in Velvet Revolver have lost a moment's sleep worrying about such issues. But you can bet your bottom dollar that they're very aware of them!

"You can't think about things like that," Slash said. "They distract from what you're trying to do. Our job is to make solid albums and put on great live shows... that's it. People are interested in us because they believe that we can make some great music, and we think they're right. But it's not like we've lost touch with the audience out there. We think we know the kind of music that they want to hear."

Of course, the return of a supergroup like Velvet Revolver has an inherent ripple effect on a number of other bands. In fact, it's amazing how renewed interest in Guns 'N' Roses has been sparked over the last few years thanks in no-small-part to VR's ever-escalating success. Even Slash, Duff and Matt—VR's resident G'N'R "experts"—can now laugh at the commotion they've caused... including, of course, the never-ending rumors surrounding a Guns 'N' Roses reunion. At this point, it certainly shouldn't come as a great shock to anyone's system to realize that there is a better chance of Tom Cruise being elected president than of Slash and Axl Rose burying the ol' hatchet anytime in the near future.

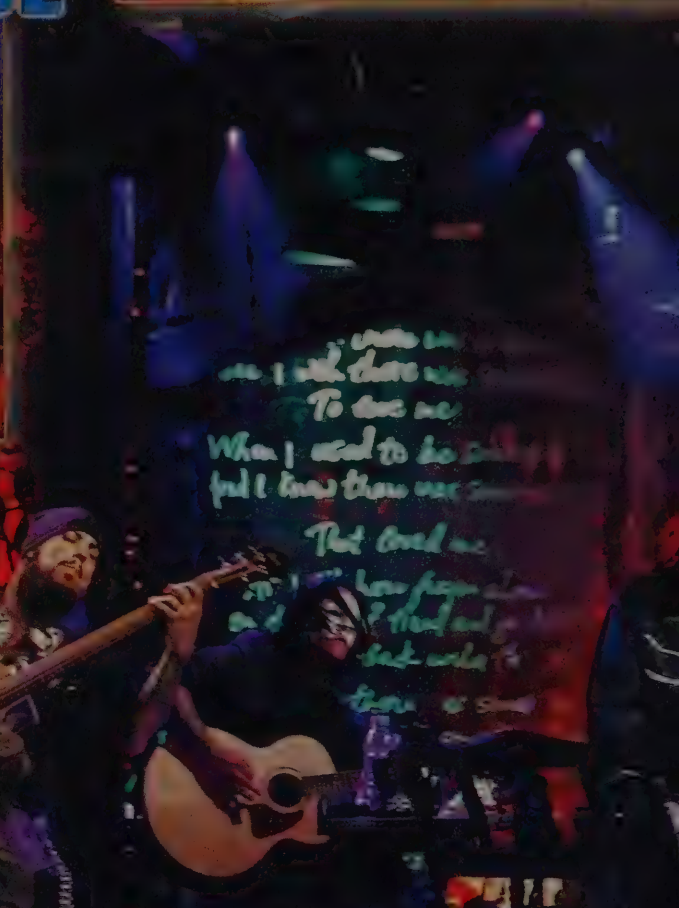
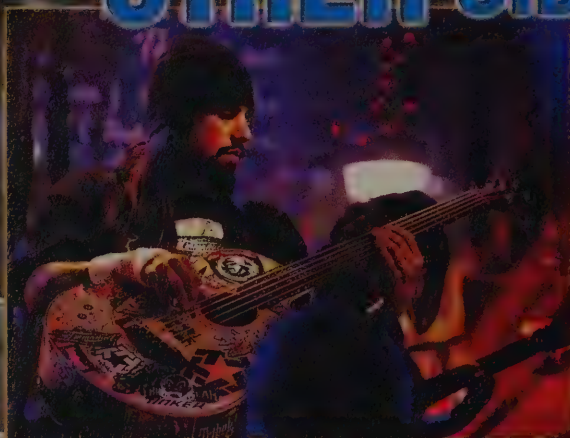
"I don't know if that's ever going to happen," said Slash in regard to settling his differences with Mr. Rose. "I have no idea where his head is at the moment... and I really don't care. Right now anything to do with Guns 'N' Roses is about the last thing on my mind. All I know is that I'm very excited about how everything seems to be keeping bigger and better with Velvet Revolver, and that's not about to change. I'm not the kind of person who ever totally closes the book on something, but it's gonna have to take something incredible to happen before I think about actually playing in any band other than this one."



HP
VELVET REVOLVER

KORN

SHOWING THEIR OTHER SIDE



When Korn decided to release their current **MTV Unplugged** live album, they did so with a surprising degree of trepidation. After all, aside from their chart-topping 2006 studio collection, *See You On The Other Side*, these legendary Bakersfield, CA rockers had recently found themselves part of a dizzying array of in-concert discs ranging from the *Live & Rare* album put out last year by their former record label (to complete contractual obligations) to their inclusion on various compilation packages, including their own *Family Values Tour* collection. So when vocalist Jonathan Davis, guitarist James "Munky" Shaffer and bassist Fieldy (drummer David Silveria is taking a "temporary leave" from the band) gave the "thumb's up" to their **Unplugged** set, they realized that it was going to have to be something truly special... and something truly unique.

"We didn't want to just put out 'another' live album," Davis said. "There was absolutely no reason for us to do that at this point in our career. But the whole

'unplugged' set was so different for us, and the vibe surrounding the event was so cool, that we thought our fans would really enjoy it. The MTV broadcast of the show got a great response, so we're hoping that the disc will generate the same kind of reaction."

Featuring acoustic performances of hits ranging from *Coming Undone* to *Freak On A Leash*, as well as guest appearances by such varied artists as Evanescence's Amy Lee and members of the Cure, **Korn: MTV Unplugged** is certainly filled with its share of unexpected rock and roll morsels. From utilizing a dozen classically trained musicians—who serve to augment Korn's sound—to the implementation of six Japanese taiko drummers on *Throw Me Away*, there's no ques-

tion that the set presents a radically different aspect of a band that helped define the heavy music ethic of the last decade.

"It's fun to show off different sides of what we do," Davis said. "This music has a lot of flexibility, and presenting it this way proves that. We brought in my old friend Richard Gibbs to serve as our musical director, and he helped coordinate a lot of the stranger stuff that was going on. But it wasn't like we really tried to create something different. To be honest, we just kind of showed up and let things take their own course."



We had never even considered playing an entire acoustic set before... and we didn't plan it. We just let it fly... and now everyone can see and hear the results."

Despite the generally positive reviews that both the MTV telecast and the **Unplugged** **live** have enjoyed, it is clear that a number of industry rumors are currently weighing down the forward momentum of the Korn camp. With Silveria's leave of absence (which will include the recording of the band's next album) occurring less than two years after founding guitarist Brian "Head" Welch left the band, major questions have emerged surrounding Korn's on-going viability. And while Davis has undoubtedly silenced all the premature talk of his group's "demise", he seems rather nonplussed when confronted with the notion that his unit's reign as a dominant hard rock force may be drawing to a close.

"We've been going virtually non-stop for more than a decade," he said. "We've accomplished some amazing things. But at the same time our lives have become somewhat more complicated. So I'm not surprised when changes happen, or when someone wants to take a break. I think we've all considered doing that at one time or another. I just hope that when the time is right we'll all be back on the same page."

Rather intriguing words from the often understated Mr. Davis. But this time around, with so many key questions surrounding Korn as they continue work on their next studio effort, it does appear as if this hallowed-unit has reached a critical crossroads in their on-going rock and roll adventure. There's little doubt that on their last album and tour it occasionally appeared as if some of the energy that had always characterized the Korn musical ethic had been drained from the band's creative process. Despite being their first release for a new label, **See You On The Other Side** followed a diminishing sales pattern initially established by such discs 1999's **Issues** 2001's **Untouchables** and 2003's **Take A Look In The Mirror**—all of which seemed dwarfed (at least in a commercial sense) when compared to the band's break-out mid-'90s releases **Korn**, **Life Is Peachy** and **Follow the Leader**. Many felt that Davis' self-possessed, and at times haunting lyrical imagery was serving to further limit the band's cross-over

appeal... though many of the group's long-time supporters believed that those said-same efforts stood at the very pinnacle of Korn's artistic output.

"If you want pretty musical pictures, I guess you'll have to listen to somebody else," Davis said. "Our fans know what they're going to get from us, and it's very beneficial for everyone involved. It's very therapeutic for me to be able to get it all out of my system, and it's good for the fans to know that they're not the only ones who have problems in their lives. I never want my lyrics to be just sweet and innocent. What good is that to anyone? I want them to have some depth, and some power. When I sit down to write lyrics, I really have to get inside my head. I have to see what's rattling around up there before I can let any of it out."

So where does all of this leave Korn as they prepare to unleash their next album in the summer of 2007? Perhaps in the eyes of some they are no longer

the hit makers and taste breakers they were in the late '90s. But at the same time, their latest on and off-stage efforts seem capable of catapulting them back to a position of prominence within the hard rock hierarchy. The success **MTV: Korn Unplugged**, as well as the sold-out nature of their latest world tour, both boldly attest to the fact that Korn remain one of the most significant bands of their era, a vital musical force against which any new pretenders to their heavy rock throne must still be measured.

"I think we still understand the kids who are in our audience," Davis said. "We go out of our way to speak to them and listen to what they have to say. Our music must speak to them. There's a passion in this music that makes it all very tangible to those who hear it. It gets into your system and just doesn't let go."

Otep Shamaya has heard it all during her five years in the rock and roll spotlight. She's been told that a female-fronted metal band will never attain true industry credibility. She's been informed that her group's darkly disturbing efforts, including such past discs as 2002's *Sevas Tra* and 2004's *House of Secrets*, are just too "out there" to ever enjoy more than cult recognition. But as Ms. Shamaya prepares to once again lead her band, Otep, into action with their latest release, *The Ascension*, this power-packed dynamo realizes more than ever before that being the dominant female in a metal band that enjoys major label distribution places her in a truly unique position.

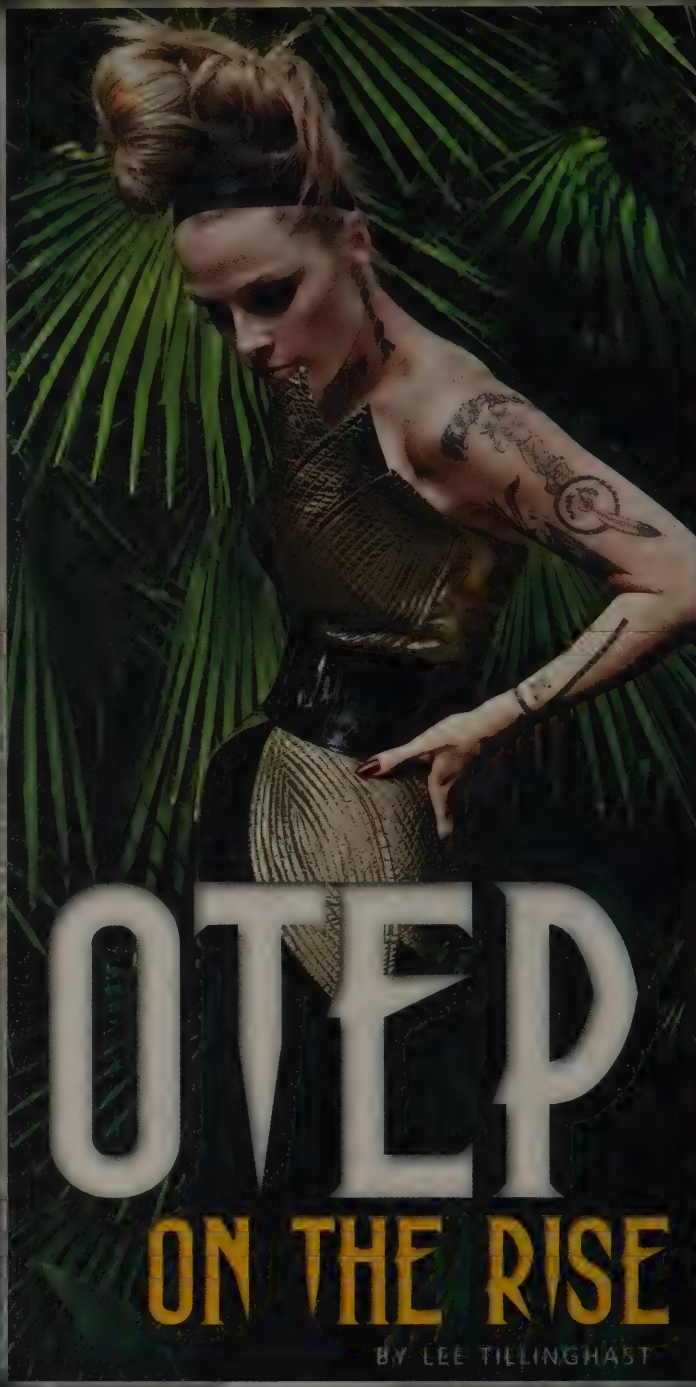
"We have always been a band that has approached this from our own perspective," she said. "There is no other group that sounds like us. And on *The Ascension*, we have added new elements that have expanded our sound and made us even more unique. We are fortunate to have people around us who believe totally in this band and in what we are attempting to do. That makes our job much easier."

Throughout their new Dave Fortman-produced outing, Otep show that whatever tags may have been placed upon them in the past (including having no less a judge of rock talent than the inimitable Marilyn Manson say "that girl scares me" when discussing Shamaya) should be conveniently tossed out the nearest window. While the band's characteristically dark, quasi-mystical sound is present on tracks such as *March of the Martyrs* and *Crooked Spoons* (co-written with Mudvayne guitarist Greg Tribbett) they take a rather radical—and unexpected—turn on the likes of *Perfectly Flawed* and their intriguing interpretation of Nirvana's *Breed*.

A song like *Perfectly Flawed* shows another side of our music personality," Shamaya said. "It's rather delicate for us, but it's a beautiful song. And the reason we decided to include our version of *Breed* is because Kurt Cobain was such an inspiration. I think our version sounds like an Otep song, but it still honors the original. It allowed us to celebrate a great band while remaining true to ourselves."

Being true to their own artistic vision has been one of Otep's principle calling cards ever since the group's debut disc scored big on the "underground" scene back in 2002. But now with the appearance of *The Ascension*, it would appear as if Otep and her loyal followers (bassist eVIL, guitarist Karma Chakra and drummer Brian Wolff) are well prepared to take the next vital step up the rock and roll ladder of success. Whether that step leads this darkly mysterious unit closer towards the metal Promised Land, or towards the edge of a precipitous cliff remains to be seen. But Shamaya seems to be reveling in the excitement—no matter what the consequences may be.

"Success or failure really aren't the issues that interest me," she said. "I'm more fascinated by the emotions required to seek those goals. There's nothing wrong with a noble failure... or a noble success."



Otep

ON THE RISE

BY LEE TILLINGHAUST

With an approach that blends touches of Egyptian mythology (the word "Otep" is an Egyptian suffix translating into "creative offerings") with a street-wise sensibility and a tough-as-nails metallic attitude, there's no question that this Los Angeles-based unit presents a distinctly different take on the world around them. Already the band's moody, angry and incredibly notable approach has drawn comparisons to everyone from Kittie to Tool, and their appearance at the 2001 OzFest frequently drew appreciative "ooohs" and "aahs" from the metal-saturated masses who populated that event. Still, for all the commotion she's already caused, and all the ruckus she's prepared to raise, Ms. Shamaya seems determined to make all of the attention focused on *The Ascension* merely the next step of her world-wide rock and roll attack.

"My music expresses who I am," she said. "There's nothing artificial here. I was a street kid who

freight train known as Otep Shamaya. As shown on such new songs as *Noose and Nail*, *Home Grown*, and *Ghostflowers*—the disc's first single/video release—it's impossible to avoid the tempest and torment that fuels each one of Otep's songs. These aren't fictional tales or emotional vents. Rather, they stand as true outpourings of a tormented soul—with a little mythology and street savvy thrown into the mix for good measure.

"I get so involved with my music that I'm often not aware of a lot that's going on around me," she said. "The people in my band like to tell the story of how I once put my head through a glass sound booth door while I was recording... and I didn't even stop singing. I didn't even know I had done that. That's how intense I get. I try to put every ounce of emotion I can into every word I sing. It all comes from a very spiritual place."

basically had to raise herself. I saw the poverty and the violence that's out there, and it had a major impact on me. People with that kind of upbringing basically have two choices in life—either you can succumb to it, or you can raise yourself out of it. I chose the latter path."

Shamaya accomplished her mission of rising out of the gutter by totally immersing herself in art and literature as well as by teaching herself about the finer elements of human existence. She became a voracious reader, with a particular fascination for the occult and ancient Egypt. As her interests grew, she began seeking an outlet for both her knowledge and her internal rage. She found it when in the late '90s she started writing songs and performing with a band in Los Angeles. Slowly but surely Shamaya's work carried her in the direction of creating her own musical unit, which finally came to fruition when Otep released their debut EP, *Jihad*, in mid-2001.

However, it wasn't until the appearance of *Sevas Tra* a year later that the world truly began to take notice of this imaginative unit. Their ability to put on incredible live shows began to win them a wide-spread following and allowed Otep to emerge as one of the most intriguing and entertaining bands on the heavy metal scene. And now with the immediate acceptance of *The Ascension*, it seems as if the entire musical universe is about to run head-on into this mystical, magical, definitely pissed off musical

"There is no other group that sounds like us."



SALIVA

BLOOD & GUTS

BY RANDY SMITH

It's a little hard for Josey Scott to fully comprehend that Saliva is now a band with four studio albums under their collective belt. With the release of this Memphis-based hard rock unit's latest disc, *Blood Stained Love Story*, however, vocalist Scott and his bandmates—guitarist Wayne Swinney, drummer Paul Crosby, bassist Dave Novotny and new guitarist Jon Montoya—have not only adapted well to their veteran status in the rock world, but have once again shown that their southern-fried brand of heavy music still has what it takes to turn on the rock and roll masses. Following as it does in the wake of such past chart-topping efforts as 2001's *Every Six Seconds* (supposedly how often men think about sex), 2002's *Back Into Your System*, and 2004's *Survival of the Sickest*, Saliva's new disc rocks and rolls, struts and strolls, continually delivering the genre-bending goods in an accessible-yet-heavy manner that seems certain to once again translate into platinum-covered success for this ambitious crew. Recently we sat down with the charismatic Mr. Scott to get the low-down on the latest happenings in the world of Saliva.

Hit Parader: You keep cranking out albums every couple of years—even when you've recently expanded your repertoire to include some acting gigs.

Josey Scott: (Laughing) Yeah, that's true. I've been fairly busy, but I'm loving it! I did some work in the movie *Hustle and Flow*, and I was in the TV series *Wanted*. I enjoy acting. It's kind of like an extension of what I do on stage, but at the same time it's very different. But I also learned that I shouldn't think too quickly about leaving my "day job." Making music is still what I do best.

HP: Is it hard to believe that Saliva's now been around for a decade, and that you've recorded four albums?

JS: It really is amazing. In my mind it sometimes seems like so little time has passed. But there is a different feeling after you do a few albums. When you release your first album, you kind of feel like you're standing out there alone. Nobody knows who you are and what you do. Early on, there were nights when we went on stage and we could see the people turn to one another and ask, "Who the hell are they?" Well, it was our job to show 'em, and I think we did. But by the time you do a fourth album, even before the album came out or we went on the road, we could all feel the buzz. It was out there. A lot of people were interested in what we'd been up to. It was a great feeling to have.

HP: Has all your past success placed extra pressure on you when you make a new album?

JS: We place the pressure upon ourselves. It doesn't come from anywhere else. We always want to push ourselves to be a great band, and

we'll work as hard as necessary to become as good as we can be. But I've got to admit that once we started recording, a lot of that pressure disappeared. We had the normal array of problems that any band has in the studio, but we could sense right-off that we were headed in the right direction. We knew we were gonna make the kind of album we wanted.

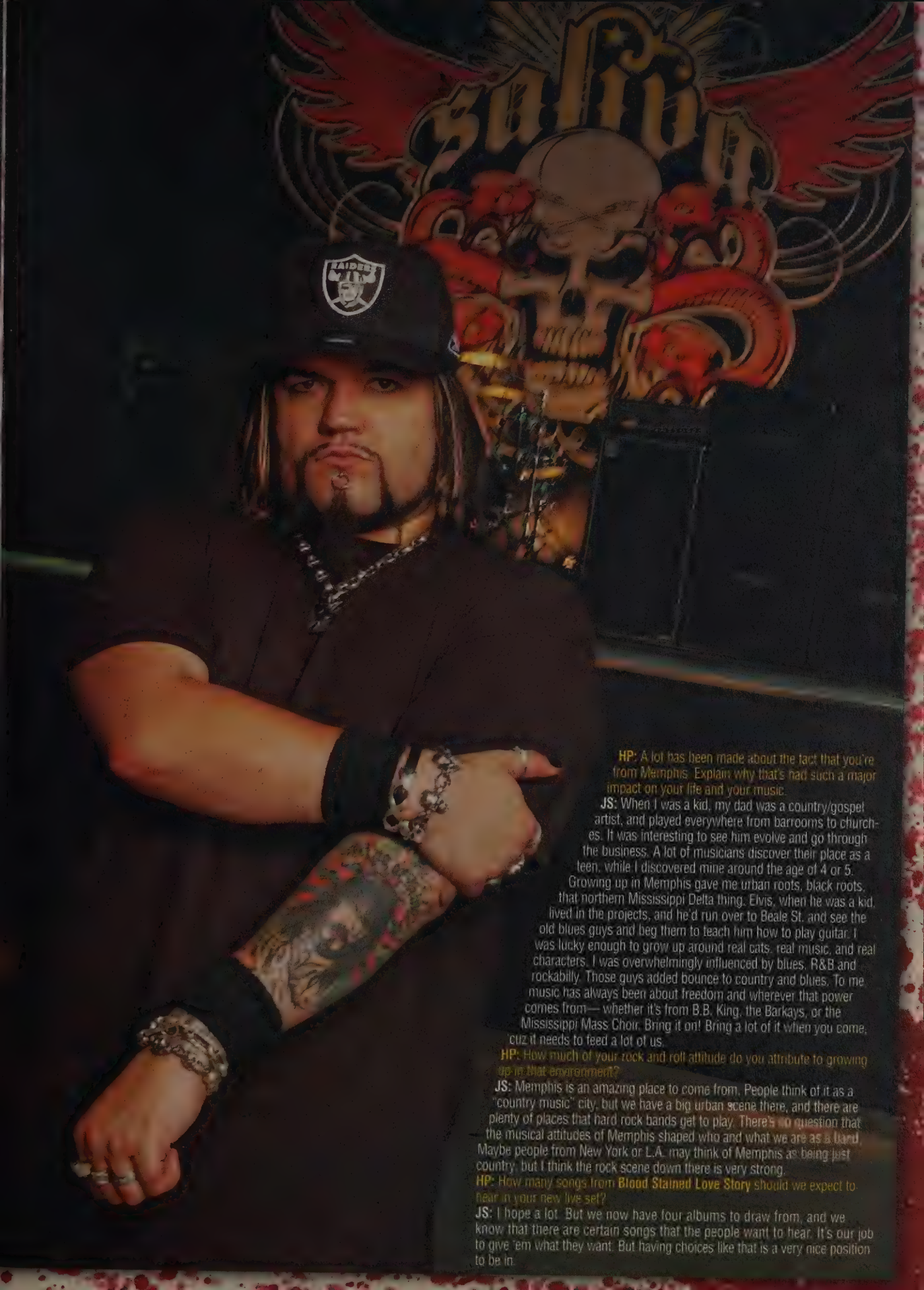
HP: In your mind, what makes *Blood Stained Love Story* special?

JS: This one is a very confident album. After you've toured all over the place, and gone through all the things that we have over the years, you naturally feel that you have a little better understanding of everything. We feel like we know what to do in the studio and what's expected of us on the road. We've been through the ringer, and we've survived.

HP: It seems as if each of your albums gets more and more diverse. This one is no exception with songs like *Broken Sunday*, *Ladies and Gentlemen*, *Never Gonna Change* and *One More Chance*.

JS: We pull from many different flavors in our music. Hard rock is real important to us—but so is whoop-ass hip-hop, which has also always been a part of our arsenal. To our way of thinking, music has always been about freedom. In Memphis, we've learned from the best... Elvis, Al Green, Aretha. They were never afraid to go 20 different places as artists. Elvis did everything from gospel to *Viva Las Vegas*, sang about everything from Jesus to the devil. That let me know that music has no boundaries. So making music that's a little bit different is real important to us.

"I've
been fairly
busy,
but I'm
loving it!"



HP: A lot has been made about the fact that you're from Memphis. Explain why that's had such a major impact on your life and your music.

JS: When I was a kid, my dad was a country/gospel artist, and played everywhere from barrooms to churches. It was interesting to see him evolve and go through the business. A lot of musicians discover their place as a teen, while I discovered mine around the age of 4 or 5. Growing up in Memphis gave me urban roots, black roots, that northern Mississippi Delta thing. Elvis, when he was a kid, lived in the projects, and he'd run over to Beale St. and see the old blues guys and beg them to teach him how to play guitar. I was lucky enough to grow up around real cats, real music, and real characters. I was overwhelmingly influenced by blues, R&B and rockabilly. Those guys added bounce to country and blues. To me music has always been about freedom and wherever that power comes from—whether it's from B.B. King, the Barkays, or the Mississippi Mass Choir. Bring it on! Bring a lot of it when you come, 'cuz it needs to feed a lot of us.

HP: How much of your rock and roll attitude do you attribute to growing up in that environment?

JS: Memphis is an amazing place to come from. People think of it as a "country music" city, but we have a big urban scene there, and there are plenty of places that hard rock bands get to play. There's no question that the musical attitudes of Memphis shaped who and what we are as a band. Maybe people from New York or L.A. may think of Memphis as being just country, but I think the rock scene down there is very strong.

HP: How many songs from **Blood Stained Love Story** should we expect to hear in your new live set?

JS: I hope a lot. But we now have four albums to draw from, and we know that there are certain songs that the people want to hear. It's our job to give 'em what they want. But having choices like that is a very nice position to be in.

LORDI

BY WINSTON CUMMINGS

CALL OF THE WILD

Mix together healthy helpings of Slipknot-inspired mask mania, Gwar-like stage spectaculars, Kiss-influenced hard rock anthems and an attitude borrowed straight from the ugly aliens in *Battlefield Earth*—that horrid John Travolta sci-fi flick that pops up on cable from time-to-time—and what you'll end up with is something akin to Finland's shock rock masters, Lordi. Yup, these Helsinki-based bad boys do look kind'a strange. And they do put on in-concert shows—where they sport Satanic wings and blow up chunks of meat amid towering walls of flame—that border precariously upon the insane. But housed within their outrageous act is also a surprising degree of rock-solid musical craftsmanship—a fact that's not only served to win them the prestigious 2006 Eurovision Song Contest (an event, by the way, previously won by the likes of ABBA and Celine Dion) but has now allowed their debut disc, *The Arockalypse*, to become an instant international hard-rock sensation.

"Our intention has always been to be the kind of band that we would have enjoyed seeing when we were fans," said frontman Mr. Lordi (whose real name is Tomi Puotinen). "So what we created on stage is a natural extension of that kind of band. We took our influences, and our own wild ideas, and merged them together into what you see up there. And in the studio, we wanted to write powerful songs that you could instantly relate to and want to fire along with. If we've begun to accomplish those goals, then I am very satisfied."

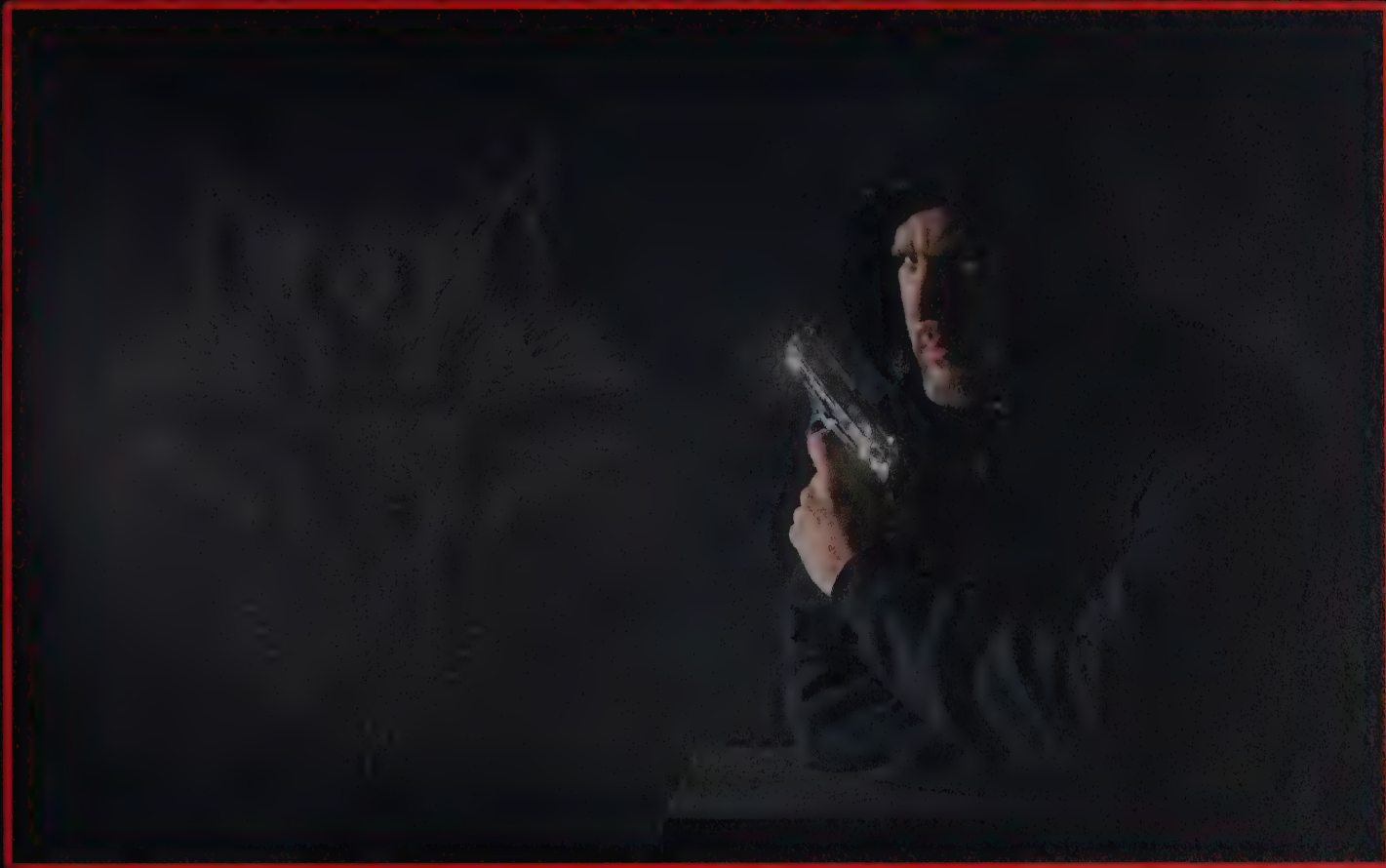
While Lordi's highly theatrical style has won growing praise from many members of the European rock community (who, perhaps somewhat naively, cite the band's abundant song-writing skills as their greatest strength), their approach has also drawn immediate scorn from those who believe that such songs as *Hard Rock Hallelujah* and *If*

Snows In Hell play too heavily off of a rather dated '80s-style metal sensibility. That's a notion further supported by the "guest star" appearances of everyone from Twisted Sister's Dee Snider to Accept's Udo Dirkschneider on various *The Arockalypse* tracks. But all such commentary is just part of a good day's work to Mr. Lordi and his crew-from-hell. In fact, if Lordi *didn't* draw their fair amount of critical and media scorn, they insist that they just wouldn't be doing their job right.

"We want to draw strong reactions from whoever sees us and hears us," he said. "Otherwise why would we go through all the effort of looking the way we do? But while many people have begun to understand what this band is doing, others apparently do not understand—or do they even want to try. They find us offensive. To be honest, I am very thankful for that."

Whether you love 'em or hate 'em, the undeniable notion is that Lordi is a band that will eventually sink or swim—especially in America—on the willingness of today's metal generation to leap aboard their anthemic hard-rock train. After all, our visual senses have already been conditioned to death by the likes of Slipknot and Mudvayne, so there's little that Lordi can present that will seem particularly new or shocking in terms of their stage antics. But in sharp contrast to the purely metallic murkings that many of their musical compatriots put forth, there is a degree of accessibility inherent with Lordi's music that makes them more akin to a modern-day Kiss. It is a comparison that brings a rather sinister smile to Mr. Lordi's face.

"We obviously admire them very much," he said. "And it was a great compliment that [former Kiss guitarist] Vinnie Vincent agreed to appear on our album. Now a musician only gave a fraction of the success that they have enjoyed over the years, I would be a very happy man."



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"WE'RE JUST USING THE
TREE OF LIFE AS A

Sometimes it's so easy for a young band striving for success—or at least one seeking some degree of recognition—to fall prey to the temptation of following well-established rock and roll precedents. Playing it "safe", as well as playing by "the rules" that so often govern the groups that will rise to the top of public acclaim, is a tradition as old as music itself. While the rock form has always proudly extolled its love for the anti-establishment "rebel", the fact is that the style—especially in the 21st Century—too frequently reaches out for the known commodity that will prove easily categorized and just as easily digested. Well, with all that in mind, let's make one point perfectly clear—Daath are one band that will never play it safe, never follow the preordained rules of the rock and roll world, and never sell out their non-traditional beliefs in order to attain greater acclaim.

There's no question that the members of this Georgia-based extreme metal band possess a decidedly different view of the contemporary music kingdom. It's not so much that vocalist Sean Farber, guitarist Emil Werstler, guitarist Eyal Levi, bassist Jeremy Creamer, keyboardist Mike Kameron and drummer Kevin Talley have set out to pointedly change the face of the heavy metal form... it's just that doing so comes so naturally to them. While Daath (who draw their unusual name from a Hebrew word that translates into "the search for unusual knowledge") play with as much ferocity and intensity as any current member of metal society, housed within the 13 songs featured on their debut disc, *The Hinderers*, are a wide variety of thought-provoking concepts—along with some highly unconventional philosophical beliefs. And while each of the rockers involved are well versed in the diverse attitudes that make Daath's self-proclaimed brand of "progressive extreme metal" so intriguing, the fact is that this is clearly a band with an approach greater than the sum of its individual parts.

"This album is based on a Kabalistic concept, but people shouldn't read more than necessary into that," Kameron said. "There are some religious themes in our lyrics, but we're definitely not a religious band. For us this music is all about exploration. The theme of *The Hinderers* is to examine the sum of all self-defeating views which keep us from rising above the norm. We're all dealing with those ideas and we all have things we've got to get through in our lives—most of which are completely internal in order to improve and move on. We've all gone through that in this band, and it represents where we are as people, as musicians and as a group. We're just using the tree of life—which is a very ancient concept—as a framework for psychological exploration and exploring various esoteric themes."

Hmmm.... it's clear from Kameron's words that Daath is certainly not focused on presenting your traditional death-doom-and-destruction metal fare! Yet, despite the rather intellectual nature of their approach, throughout *The Hinderers*, Daath's "tree of

FRAMEWORK FOR EXPLORING
VARIOUS ESOTERIC THEMES."

DAATH THE SEARCH IS ON



life" philosophies merge with their blatantly metallic style to create some of the year's most compelling extreme sounds. In some ways, the sounds presented on such tracks as *Sightless*, *Under A Somber Sign* and *Festival of Mass Soulform* hark back to an earlier Dark Metal time—a period in the early '90s when imagination and intelligence seemed to play as vital a role in a band's musical presentation as their sheer sonic power. With the disc also featuring an all-encompassing "groove"—thanks in no-small-part to Daath's Atlanta roots—on their first outing this heavily armed sextet have delivered the extreme metal

BY RICHARD HELD

goods with extreme prejudice. Yet, at its heart, this is an album based on some very ancient, and time-tested principles.

"Very little on this album was left to chance,"

some very specific goals in mind."

While Daath is clearly a fresh, new face on the international metal scene, all of this metal mysticism has been coming together over a long

with creating **The Hinderers**. Now nearly three years after first inking that deal, Daath is finally ready to unleash their first well-planned sonic salvo upon the metal masses.



Levi said. "It was all carefully planned by all of us. There are 13 songs on the album for a very good reason. It happens that there are 13 points on the tree of life, and we're attempting to explore an inverted tree of life on **The Hinderers**. Mike has researched the attributes of each of those points, and then each of our songs corresponds to one of them. The music has a lot of thought behind it, and so do our lyrics. Despite being from Atlanta, which we know has become known for a certain kind of rock music, we're not the kind of band that gets together and jams. We write and record very much as a team—and with

period of time for the members of this ambitious unit. In fact, Levi, Kameron and Farber formed their first band in the late '90s when they were still in high school. But it wasn't until after the three expanded their musical pedigree by graduating from Boston's prestigious Berklee College of Music that they began viewing their work together as a possible career. Over the next year, the various components—and musicians—that now form Daath began to come together, each providing greater insight and inspiration to this extremely dedicated crew. Finally in 2004, the band signed a recording deal and began the labor-intensive process involved

"After so much planning and effort, it's almost a little hard for us to realize that the album is finally done," Levi said. "It's like suddenly confronting a different reality. Now we need to get ready to get on the road and promote it any way we can. The fact is that this album is our lives right now. We've been working on it for more than two years, and we've poured so much energy into it that we didn't allow time for doing anything else. But now, with the album finally out, it's like a new chapter in our lives has begun. Nothing could excite us more. Now people can begin to share some of our ideas—we just hope they get off on it all as much as we do."

A black and white photograph of the band Linkin Park, consisting of six members standing in a row against a dark background.

Linkin Park

It's been four long years since the rock world last heard new music from Linkin Park. During that time this highly-acclaimed, award-winning, chart-topping So Cal unit has experienced both the highs and lows that frequently accompany incredible world-wide acclaim. They went through a brief yet very public tussle with their record label, and in the process of doing so found themselves emerging as a stronger, more cohesive band than ever before. They tested the waters with a variety of solo projects, none of which came close to matching the degree of instant fan recognition enjoyed by such previous band efforts as **Hybrid Theory** and **Meteora**, which together have sold an astounding 20 million copies. But the long period of group inactivity certainly didn't dull the creative aspirations of Mike Shinoda (vocals), Chester Bennington (vocals), Brad Delson (guitar), Joseph Hahn (keyboards), Dave "Phoenix" Farrell (bass) and Rob Bourdon (drums). With the release of their latest effort, **Minutes to Midnight**, these six have not only immediately reignited the commercial spark that first shot them to fame, they've also solidified their position among the most creative and respected rock forces of their era.

"Making this album was an incredible experience for us," said Shinoda, who doubled as co-producer of **Minutes to Midnight** with the legendary Rick Rubin. "We felt like we wanted to reinvent the way we approached our music, and that's what we did on this album. We worked on the songs for more than a year, and ended up with over 100 of them to choose from. Of course, having so many made it difficult to get down to the number that finally made it onto the album. But after going through such an exhaustive process, we knew that what we ended up with was where we needed to be at this point in our career."

The fact is that as they prepare to hit the road in support of their third studio release, it seems as if nothing can shake the recently invigorated confidence of the Linkin Park pack. Rather than being intimidated by the concept of attempting to repeat the historic, multi-platinum success enjoyed by their previous albums, such a prospect seems to fill this ever-clever unit with a sense of anticipatory glee. And with the



BY P.J. MERKLE

immediate acclaim being heaped upon such new songs as *What I've Done*, it's now become abundantly clear that when it comes to creating some of the most compelling and intriguing music on the planet, Linkin Park knows no bounds.

"We love what we do; it's that simple," Shinoda said. "It was very exciting for us to write in different ways and try different instrumental sounds and take advantage of new studio developments. We wanted to challenge ourselves every day. That's all part of what we are as a band. Linkin Park isn't set-in-stone; it grows and evolves like a living thing."

Perhaps at this point in Linkin Park's amazing career, it's time to put some of

their incredible accomplishments into a proper perspective. During their meteoric rise to the top, it seems like just about everything has fallen perfectly into place for this sextet. After a number of false starts—including calling themselves Xero and Hybrid Theory—this unit renamed themselves after Lincoln Park in Santa Monica (which, by the way, has now been re-named Christine Emerson Reed Park.) Indeed, once their debut disc, **Hybrid Theory**, began to pick up sales and media momentum about three months after its release in July, 2000, the Park Patrol has never looked back. Their videos for songs like *One Step Closer* and *Crawling* began to appear on MTV on a seemingly on-the-hour basis, and their

cool-yet-accessible visages began to pop up on magazine covers from Los Angeles to London. Indeed, at times it's seemed like it's been just one high point after another for the LP brigade— with highlights that have included the overwhelming acceptance of their second disc, **Meteora** (which spawned hits like *Somewhere I Belong*), as well as their ground-breaking live and

with your five best friends is the we're always out there to protect one another," Shinoda said. "There's not one of us who ever becomes a single target for the media or anyone else. We all talk to the press and MTV. We all share in everything. It makes things so much easier for us."

One might imagine that in the wake of their massive commercial success and the

their efforts. Yet following the release of **Minutes to Midnight** it seems that with each passing day, as more and more fans latch on to the latest batch of hybrid anthems that remain this group's highly distinctive calling card, the LP brigade continue to reach for the stars. Certainly with success comes additional pressure. And clearly with acclaim can come internal strife and inflated egos. Yet somehow, despite their record-shattering success— and their recent run-in with their label— this amazing unit has managed to avoid just about every pitfall strewn along rock's primrose path.

"Making this album was an incredible experience for us."

They still get along like brothers. They still treat their fans with a degree of dignity rarely seen in today's rock world. And their focus remains squarely on their music. Perhaps it is that special combination of qualities that keeps Linkin Park at the very apex of the contemporary music scene.

"We've learned a lot about ourselves over the last few years," Shinoda said. "And, I'm happy to say, most of those lessons have been very positive ones. We always knew that we had passion for the music we make, but we've learned that a little success and recognition has only added to that passion. I think you hear that in the new music that we've made. All the good things that have happened to us over the



"mix" discs (most notably their Jay-Z inspired effort, **Collision Course**) serving as further proof of this unusual unit's modern-day Midas touch.

"The best part about being in a band

overwhelming artistic respect that this unit has garnered from seemingly every corner of the contemporary music world, for the members of Linkin Park their on-going acclaim is almost an expected by-product of

last seven years have only made us more determined to keep pushing things in a very exciting way. We couldn't be happier with the way things have gone if we had drawn it all up ourselves."

King Diamond

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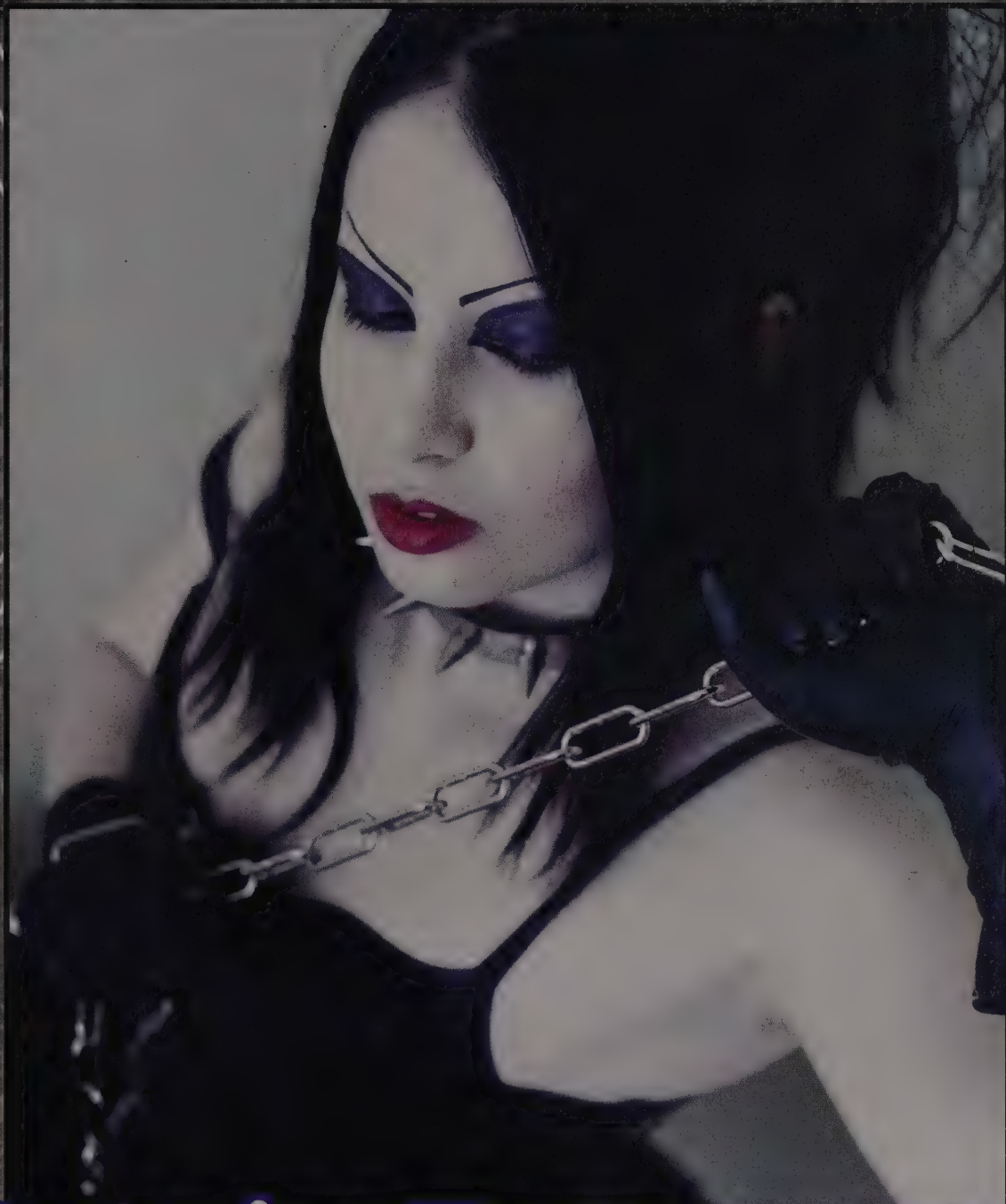
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Hard rock is a medium filled with life. It is a form based on its energy, its passion and it's live-for-today philosophies. Alas, in such a lifestyle there must always be those who succumb to the vagaries of such an approach. These rockers are Metal's Fallen Heroes, some of the most famous and infamous performers the rock and roll world has ever seen. From superstars like Jimi Hendrix, Randy Rhoads, Kurt Cobain and John Bonham to timeless personalities such as Bon Scott, Freddie Mercury and Dimebag Darrell each and every one of our featured stars brought a unique persona to their too-short time on Planet Earth. They may be gone, but they'll never be forgotten, and with that in mind, we present this heart-felt tribute to Metal's Fallen Heroes.

HIT PARADER PRESENTS THE ULTIMATE SLIPKNOT POSTER MAGAZINE!!



Things are hotter than ever in the world of Slipknot. Indeed, in many ways this is the start of a new day, a new era and possibly a new revolution for the one and only Knot. For d.j. Sid Wilson, bassist Paul Gray, guitarist James Root, drummer Joey Jordison, keyboardist Craig Jones, percussionist Chris Fehn, percussionist Shawn "Clown" Crahan, guitarist Mick Thompson and vocalist Corey Taylor (also known to their ever-loyal followers as 0,1,2,3,4,5,6,7 and 8) it's time to focus all of their collective energies into once again becoming the most infamous heavy metal band on Earth. With that in mind, Hit Parader offers this salute to the one and only Slipknot in the form of our incredible poster special.



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BY FRANK CAFIERO

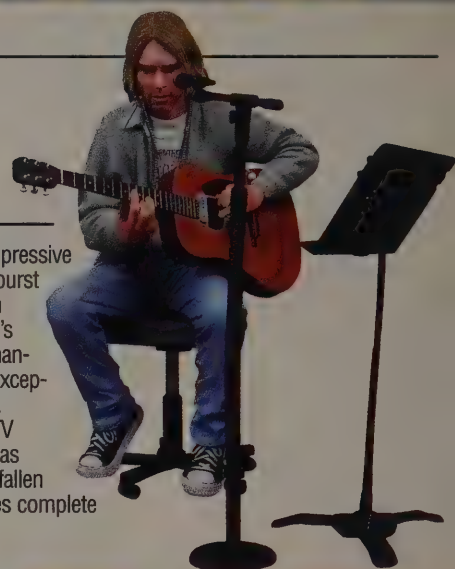
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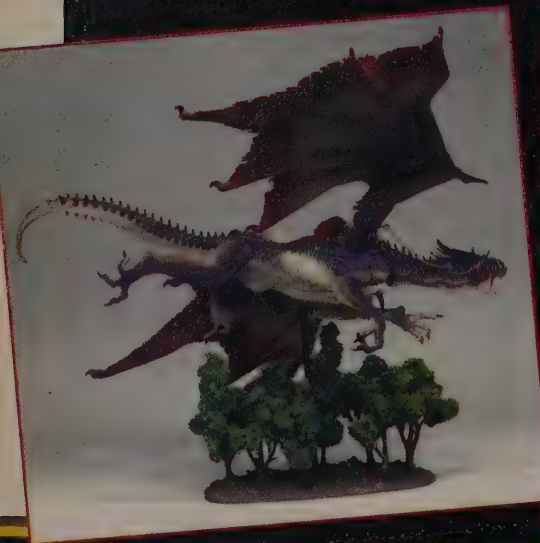
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Edited by: Kyle Anderson

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HP DVD REVIEWS

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The Hamiltons seem to be the picture-perfect American family. They are hard working community members who give to their local charities, attend town hall meetings and are always respectful of their neighbors — except for the fact that they usually end up killing them. The Hamiltons serves up a clever new twist on the classic vampire story. Playing out more like a teenage misfit or coming of age movie rather than a typical vampire flick, the film was the highly-acclaimed winner at the Santa Barbara International Film Festival and the Malibu Film Festival.

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WICKED LITTLE THINGS

In the style of Tim Burton, comes a twisted little fairy tale from the director of *The Forsaken*. Recently widowed Karen Tunny and her two daughters, Sarah and Emma, move to a remote mountain home, which Karen has inherited from the family of her late husband. However, she is unaware that the home is situated near an old mine, the site of an early 20th Century tragedy where many children were buried alive. Will the Tunny family survive the bloody onslaught, as the children unleash their bloody revenge on anyone who ventures near the mine that entombs them?

DVD SPECIAL FEATURES: Audio commentary with director J.S. Cardone and actor Lori Heuring.



DARK RIDE

Nearly a decade after two young girls are brutally murdered, their monstrous killer, Jonah, escapes from a mental institution and seeks refuge at his familiar killing ground, the theme park attraction, Dark Ride. He finds a group of college kids who stumble upon the attraction during a road trip to become his new victims. As the killer lurks among the sets within the ride, he turns their night of youthful fun into a nightmare...giving them a "ride" they will never forget. This is a terrifying film that will have you looking over your shoulders the next time you get on a roller coaster.

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REINCARNATION

From Takashi Shimizu, the director of *The Grudge* and *The Grudge 2*, comes the complex and compelling horror film *Reincarnation*. Thirty-five years after a mass murder, a film director returns to the scene of the crime to recreate the gruesome killings on film. When the production begins in the now abandoned hotel, the cast members begin to see creepy visions and have chilling nightmares. As shooting commences, the actors start suffering the same fates as their characters — the original murder victims.

DVD SPECIAL FEATURES: Deleted scenes, *The Making of Reincarnation* featurette, *Memories of Reincarnation* - Interview with director Takashi Shimizu, Film introduction by director Takashi Shimizu.

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Next Month: The next four films in the 8 Films To Die For 2006 series.



STONE SOUR

Despite all of its inherent glitz and glamour... its fame and fortune, it's not always easy being a rock and roll star. There's the pressure. There's the responsibility. There's the day-to-day grind of dealing with an ever-watchful media. And there's the incredible wear-and-tear that constant touring can put on your body and mind. No matter what amount of money is lining your over-stuffed pocket, and no matter what degree of adulation you find yourself enjoying, handling stardom can become a bit of a headache even for the most "together" rocker.

Stone Sour's Corey Taylor knows exactly what we mean.

The once-and-future vocalist for Slipknot freely admits that after spending the better part of the last three years on the road with his Knot brothers, he probably could have used a bit of a break. Hey, laying out on a beach in Hawaii is about as "rock and roll" as you can get... ain't it? But rather than taking his well-deserved respite from the rigors of the music world, as soon as the opportunity presented itself Taylor got back together with Knot-mate guitarist James Root, guitarist Josh Rand, bassist Shawn Economaki and new drummer Roy Mayorga and recorded Stone Sour's second album, *Come What(ever) May*.

In style and sound, Stone Sour's more up-beat, melodic metal direction has once again served to invigorate Taylor's somewhat overwrought rock and roll soul. After recording and touring non-stop with Slipknot, he knew he needed a change, and joining back together with his long-time buds—with whom he had created Stone Sour's 2002's platinum-selling, self-titled debut disc—was exactly what the doctor ordered. Indeed, working within the Stone Sour context to create a sound and image that was a strident contradiction to the Knot's vaunted shock-rock attack proved to be the perfect elixir to cure all the ills that ailed the vocalist's strained nervous system.

"I had poured everything I had into the last Slipknot tour, and we all needed a break," he said. "We've learned that's the pattern we need to follow, work as hard as we can for as long as we can, then just step away for awhile. Now we all know that when the time comes, we'll look forward to putting our masks back on. And nothing against Slipknot, but right now Stone Sour is the most important thing in my life."

Those who understand the effort that Taylor—as

well as each of his Slipknot partners—put into making their band a true international phenomenon over the last decade, realize the validity of his words. At the end of their *Subliminal Verses* road trek Slipknot needed a break from the day-in, day-out rigors associated with being one of the most overwhelming bands in recent metal history. And as the rest of the Nine Man Mutant Metal Army took off to "parts unknown" to enjoy their down-time, Taylor and Root decided to pick up exactly where they had left off with Stone Sour back in '03.

"Stone Sour has been a part of me ever since we first started playing music together back in 1992," Taylor said. "But it took me all the way until 2002 to find the time to get everyone back together. It was worth the wait. That's why I knew we had to do it again with *Come What(ever) May*. I had thought about the band a lot over the years—and I thought about the music we made, and the music we could have made. It still excited me, even after all the success of Slipknot. So after the success we had with the first Stone Sour album, that excitement reached a new level. As soon as I ended the last Knot tour, my thoughts turned to Stone Sour. It was like a different part of my brain clicked on. You've got to remember, this was the band I was in before Slipknot—the first band that I ever really seriously cared about. Obviously, it's very different from Slipknot—but that was the whole point."

Without his Knot trademark mask and coveralls to "hide" behind, in Stone Sour Taylor seems quite content to stand "naked" before the world, letting his music—rather than his image—do his primary talking. With *Come What(ever) May* already proving to be a bigger success than *Stone Sour*—thanks to a string of radio-ready hits like *Through Glass* and *30/30-150*—it is apparent that Taylor is going to remain busy at his current band's helm well into 2007. So what does this all mean in terms of Slipknot's future? We all know that there will be one... but when?

"I'd think we'll probably all get back together sometime within the next year," Taylor said. "But none of us are in any hurry. I don't miss wearing the mask at all. It's great to have people be able to see my expressions on stage and to react differently to what the audience does. That mask is such an integral part of Slipknot, and it always will be. But there is a different side to my musical personality, and this is it. Anyway, those masks can get kind of hot and bothersome at times. But when the time comes to put mine back on, you'd better believe I'll be ready."

Obviously, one question that must be asked is how Taylor will react if Stone Sour's career continues to expand and the unit ends up being as big as Slipknot. With the band's work on the recent *Family Values Tour* drawing even more attention the group's way, it's not without reason to think that the success of Stone Sour could throw an unexpected crimp into Slipknot's plans to reunite and begin writing for their next album in late '07. And while he admits that he would love to see Stone Sour become a multi-platinum smash, Taylor does his best to deflect any talk that he may soon be facing a monumental musical conflict of interest.

"It's a 'problem' I'd like to have," Taylor said. "I'm going to do everything in my power to make sure that Stone Sour becomes as big as possible. We'll take everything from there. If demand on our time becomes too great, that's when I'll start to worry about things. At the moment the course is clear: we all hope the album continues to do well, and that we keep touring behind it. It would be great if the demand for Stone Sour was great enough to make going back to Slipknot a little more delayed at that time. But, let's face it, we all know what we have to do."

"I'm going to do everything in my power to make Stone Sour as big as possible."

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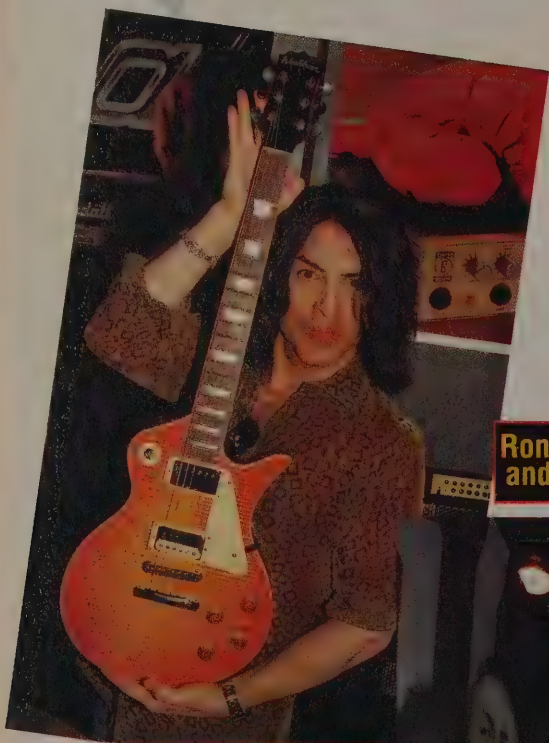
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HP
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the NAMM show⁰⁷ part II

Recently Hit Parader attended the **Winter NAMM Show** in Anaheim, California. **NAMM** is the annual event where some of the biggest stars in the rock world hang out with the industry's top instrumental manufacturers in order to help endorse and promote the latest and greatest rock and roll equipment. This time around, as well as focusing in on the stars themselves—who, after all you can see on every other page of this fine publication—we thought we'd zero in on the year's most exciting new equipment. It was all on display at the **Winter NAMM Show 2007**.



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GAMES & GEAR

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